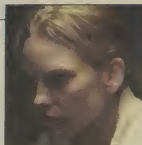


Another marriage study, same result
On eve of SF court cases challenging law,
new CDC study confirms marriage benefits.
page 11

A look back at 2004
Our year in review starts
with look at health news.
page 12

Inside boxing
Hilary Swank as
'Million Dollar Baby.'
see Arts section



BAY AREA REPORTER

Vol. 34 • No. 52 • 23 December 2004

Serving the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender communities since 1971



Rick Gerhart

Happy holidays!

"Naughty" Santa is surrounded by his olive-colored escorts from a variety of entertainment venues, posing for a photo Saturday, December 18th at Market and Castro. The event was the last in a series of promotional events for the Merchants of Upper Market and Castro's "Groovy Holiday 2004" that included live jazz music and a traditional Santa. The celebration was dedicated to the gay holiday tradition in the city.

San Francisco plays historic role in gay marriage case

by Matthew S. Bajko



Dennis Herrera

San Francisco Superior Court Judge Richard Kramer will hear arguments Wednesday, December 22 on the constitutionality of excluding same-sex couples from the right to marry. The hearing, which involves six cases that have been consolidated, will mark a milestone in the struggle for civil rights.

For the first time in American history, a city will be challenging the constitutionality of marriage laws that discriminate against same-sex couples. Past cases in Massachusetts, Hawaii, and New Jersey have been brought forth by gay rights groups or gay and lesbian couples.

Now San Francisco will add its municipal voice to the fight, arguing not just on behalf

of its gay and lesbian citizenry, but all 770,723 of its residents.

"I think that is significant and having the leadership of a major American city working side by side with private plaintiffs brings an added dimension that you don't see elsewhere," said City Attorney Dennis Herrera during an interview in his City Hall offices Friday, December 17. "I think that is important in today's political climate, where people

are trying to make gay and lesbian people scapegoats for what is going on politically in America."

As a team of 11 deputy city attorneys and seven outside counsel with the law firm of Howard Rice Nemerovski Canady Falk & Rabkin prepared for the city's day in court, Herrera appeared relaxed and ready to begin

page 16 ►

SF reports cases of rare STD in gay men

by Matthew S. Bajko

San Francisco health officials announced this week they had detected four cases of a rare form of chlamydia in gay men over the last five months and urged sexually active gay men to be aware of and tested for the disease.

In early December, the Department of Public Health identified a gay male patient infected with Lymphogranuloma Venereum (LGV), an invasive form of the bacterium Chlamydia trachomatis. The STD infects the lymphatic system and may cause significant scarring of the genitals or rectum if left untreated.

Following that discovery, health officials began retesting samples taken from MSM and found three more cases of LGV, one each from June, July, and August. More testing is being done to determine when the first cases of LGV appeared in San Francisco, though health officials suspect the infections may have begun last spring after an outbreak of LGV was detected in the Netherlands.

In October, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued a warning about the Dutch outbreak, where 92 cases of the rare infection have been confirmed over the last 17 months. The first 13 cases, diagnosed during April through November of

page 17 ►

Queer teen activist honored by Dufty and supervisors

by Zak Szymanski

The Board of Supervisors chambers was packed last Tuesday, December 14 to honor each supervisor's pick for Youth Recognition Day, an annual event hosted in conjunction with the city's Youth Commission to highlight the positive achievements of younger people in San Francisco.

Among the honorees was the openly queer Monica Magtoto — selected by her neighborhood representative, openly gay Supervisor Bevan Dufty — for her work with the LGBT organization Community United Against Violence.

From 2001-2004, Magtoto, 17, worked as a peer educator at CUAV's Love and Justice project, an outreach and empowerment initiative that conducts trainings for queer youth of color around the country.

"I did all kinds of trainings at school and conferences, on all topics, from safer sex to homophobia to anti-oppression to domestic violence," said Magtoto. "And I learned so much I wouldn't have learned otherwise."

Magtoto — a high school senior with plans to go to art school — is in many ways the face of what it now means to be queer: unlike a gay, lesbian, or bisexual identity, queer is most often — and some would say most accurately — used by those who wish to distinguish themselves from binary thought and who operate from an inclusive political bent.

"I date boys — and boys," said Magtoto, pointing out that her attractions range from male-assigned genetic guys to self-identified tranny boys in LGBT circles. "I don't consider myself straight. I don't follow heterosexual pedagogy and I'm not looking to limit myself whatsoever. The word 'queer' is all encompassing."

But who she is romantically involved with is also not the sole factor in what makes her



Rick Gerhart

Monica Magtoto, third from left, and her colleagues from Community United Against Violence's Love and Justice project, at the Board of Supervisors' annual Youth Recognition Day.

queer; she grew up entrenched in the queer community in a neighborhood that borders the Mission, Castro, and Glen Park districts.

"Sometimes people make me feel like I'm not 'queer enough.' But I grew up as a part of this community. Then I got to middle school and started hearing terms like 'fag' and 'that's so gay,' and I just didn't understand where that came from; I didn't get it. Queer was already a part of my everyday life, and that's why I got involved with this work."

Last week's awards ceremony honored a young person from each supervisor's district, including the Mission District's Salvador Rodriguez, a former gang member who now mentors children and counsels them to stay away from violence. He was selected for his honor by openly gay Supervisor Tom Ammiano.

Other honorees were David Abella, Anna Chen, Chantel Elmore, Benish Kahn, Lilly Marshall-Fricker, Clotel Norman, Elizabeth Thompson, Israel Toro, and Maria Zaragoza.

Magtoto received a rowdy reception when her name was called.

"It was kind of fancy," said Magtoto. "Bevan introduced me and it was really exciting. And he called me over to talk to me in person and to shake my hand."

Dufty said he chose Magtoto as his honoree because "I thought she was really symbolic of the direction our community is moving. I was so impressed with her involvement with diverse communities within the LGBT community."

The ceremony further proved that point. "Her posse really turned out for her. It was just a rainbow of young people," said Dufty. "Many of my colleagues approached me and said how moved they were by her energy, passion, and enthusiasm. When she spoke, she lit up the board chambers. I expect her to do great things."

For her part, Magtoto said she "never thought twice" about getting involved with the community.

"Youth having a voice, and having access to education — it's something that should happen anyway," she said. ▼

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Group dubs Castro's 'Naughty' of 2004

by Tyson Gillfillan

The community group And Castro for All celebrated the kickoff of its new antidiscrimination hotline with a holiday demonstration, "Naughty and Nice in 2004," Saturday, December 18. Amid a bustling Saturday evening in the Castro, some 35 group members donned Santa hats and took to the streets to promote their cause.

The group caroled down 18th Street, singing songs such as "Civil Rights are Coming to Town," "I Saw Natali Dissing Everyone" and "I'm Not Dreaming of a White Castro" to the tune of popular Christmas melodies. Stopping at the Badlands bar, event organizer Don Romesburg presented a stocking of coal and chiding holiday cards for Les Natali, the embattled owner who has been accused of discriminatory practices at his establishments Badlands and the Detour.

Afterwards the group distributed cards throughout the neighborhood to business owners and passersby promoting its hotline, a service designed to connect alleged victims of discrimination with support and services such as HRC and the state Fair Employment and Housing Department.

"Tonight is about showing that in this day and age we are not willing to put up with discrimination based on race or gender," said



An angry Badlands customer, left, who refused to give his name, sends a message to And Castro for All members, right, who had just left stockings filled with coal in front of the bar.

Romesburg. "We want to let people know that we are staying vigilant about the ongoing Badlands situation and are still concerned about discriminatory practices."

Bennett, who asked that his last name be withheld, is one Badlands patron who strongly disagreed with And Castro for All's tactics. "This is being taken way out of hand," he said. "I've been a Badlands regular for four years, and none of [And Castro for All demonstrators] ever come in here."

Bennett said he had never personally seen Natali act in a discriminatory manner, and believes that Natali is being unfairly singled out for "conducting his business just like every other bar in the neighborhood." Inside Badlands, most patrons and staffers were largely ambivalent as they strained to hear or purposefully ignored the muffled voices of the sidewalk choir.

Natali, who was not present during the demonstration, was unavailable for comment as of press time, but throughout the allegations of discrimination he has maintained his innocence. Natali supporters during the demonstration characterized the movement against his businesses as "vindictive" and "baseless." HRC is investigating the allegations.

Although the event was dubbed "Naughty and Nice in 2004," organizers did not laud any Castro organizations outside of their own for being particularly

nice. Instead, Romesburg portrayed the new hotline as a "nice holiday gift that keeps giving all year." In a November ceremony at the LGBT Community Center, the group presented awards to several of its members and community allies for working to advance the cause of diversity.

"We want to be very clear," Romesburg said, "that although we grew out of IsBadlandsBad.com, And Castro for All's mission is to create long-term change, promoting diversity and inclusion throughout the neighborhood."

And Castro for All was formed in August, and according to Romesburg, the group and the hotline operate fiscally under the LGBT Community Center. Although he described its membership as multiracial and multi-gendered, he acknowledged that the organization will wait to seek more formal status until it can assemble a board of directors with a full diversity of leadership including male, female and transgender members.

And Castro for All's hotline provides area victims of discrimination with information including government agencies for seeking recourse, evidence needed to support a discrimination claim, assistance finding legal representation, and help finding others who have experienced discrimination at the same establishment. It can be reached by calling (415) 865-5642. ▼

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Holiday dinners welcome attendance, contributions

by Zak Szymanski

Many LGBT people hope to spend the holidays with their chosen families or by helping those less fortunate. San Francisco organizations offer plenty of events to lend a hand or celebrate with others.

The **AIDS Emergency Fund** hosts its 17th annual holiday dinner for people with HIV/AIDS during the afternoon of December 24 at the War Memorial Building's Green Room, 401 Van Ness Avenue at McAllister.

Hundreds of volunteers will prepare and serve a lavish dinner to about 1,200 PWAs and their friends and families. Turkey and all the traditional trimmings will be served at three separate meal times: noon, 1:30, and 3 p.m. The dinner includes a visit from Santa Claus and live entertainment provided by popular performers.

Invitations to the AEF dinner are available from any of the major AIDS organizations in the city. One invitation entitles a person with HIV/AIDS to bring one guest.

Project Open Hand still needs volunteers as well as donations to ensure the success of its

annual holiday meals for seniors and people with disabling conditions. Senior holiday meals are prepared and delivered on December 23, and Christmas dinners are prepared and delivered on December 24 to about 2,000 people living with HIV/AIDS and other illnesses.

Volunteer shifts for December 24 are as follows: 9 to 11:30 a.m. is meal preparation; noon to 1:30 p.m. is meal packaging and assembly line; and 3 to 5 p.m. is delivery to clients.

As usual, **Project Open Hand** said it is counting on the generosity of the Jewish community this Christmas, with longtime volunteers from Congregation Sha'ar Zahav donating their time and energies to feeding others.

Interested volunteers and donors from all communities should call (415) 447-2300.

Metropolitan Community Church and Foundation of San Francisco will be giving out holiday packages of toiletries, knit hats, and chocolates at its shower program at Mission High School on the morning of Friday, December 24, and again at its regularly held Simply Supper program at 150 Eureka Street at 3:15 p.m. that day. Simply Supper is open to any-

one who is hungry.

Volunteer shifts are filled for these events, but the foundation always needs financial contributions so that it can continue its charitable work. For more information, visit www.mccsf.org or call (415) 863-4434.

As is tradition, **Glide Memorial United Methodist Church** will serve thousands of hungry people a delicious Christmas feast with ham, turkey, and all the trimmings on Christmas Day at 330 Ellis Street.

Holiday volunteer positions at Glide are filled, but donations are always needed; call (415) 674-6070 or visit www.glide.org/give/donate.asp.

Tenderloin Tessie's Holiday Dinners is also expecting a large crowd of attendees. Christmas dinner is held December 25 from 1 to 4 p.m. at the First Unitarian Church, 1187 Franklin, at Gough. Dinner usually includes turkey or ham with all the trimmings, entertainment, and a gift bag.

Tessie's needs set-up, service, and clean-up volunteers Friday, December 24 from 4 to 7 p.m. and Saturday December 25 from 8 to 11 a.m.; 12:30 to 4 p.m.; and 4 to 7 p.m. Call (415) 922-0422 to leave availability time or to offer donations. ▼



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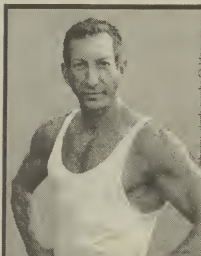
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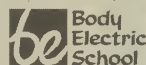


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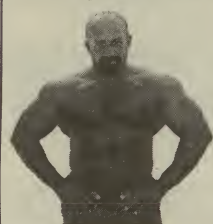


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News in brief

compiled by Cynthia Laird

Emperor, Empress nominations open

The Imperial Council of San Francisco Inc. has announced that applications for next year's Emperor and Empress of San Francisco are now being accepted. Applications are available at Marlena's bar, 488 Hayes Street in San Francisco, and online at www.imperialcouncilsf.org. The 2005 coronation takes place February 19.

Handbook on new DP law

The National Center for Lesbian Rights and Equality California have announced the release of a new publication intended to

help same-sex couples understand the ramifications of the state's new domestic partner law, AB205, which goes into effect January 1. Titled *The New California Domestic Partnership Law (AB205): What It Means for You and Your Family*, the handbook explains who can register as domestic partners, how to register, how to dissolve a partnership, and what rights, benefits, protections, and responsibilities will be provided under the new law. The document is available online at www.nclrights.org.

NCLR New Year's party

The National Center for Lesbian Rights will host "Dancin' on Top of the World" Friday, December 31 from 8:30 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. at The Carnelian Room, 555 Cali-

fornia Street, 52nd floor, in San Francisco. Co-hosted by Bay Area Community of Women, the event is being billed as the city's premier lesbian event to ring in the new year. There will be a "singles mingle" party from 8:30 to 10:30 p.m. that includes speed dating.

DJ Nica spins oldies, disco, dance, hip-hop and more for the dance party, which will feature gourmet hors d'oeuvres, desserts, party favors, and a champagne toast. The venue features sweeping views of San Francisco.

Tickets are \$100 each, although \$25 volunteer discounts are available. To purchase tickets, visit www.bacw.org. For more information, e-mail Mindy Bosker at mindyb@bacw.org.

Urban Forage closes amid controversy

by Zak Szymanski

The phone lines ring without an answer, the Web site is down. Days after a coalition of former employees, contractors, and labor organizers made headlines calling for a boycott of the raw food restaurant Urban Forage, all three locations of the business in the Fillmore, the Castro, and the Mission now appear to be closed.

An article in the *Bay Area Reporter* on December 9 detailed the accusations against Urban Forage, with former workers and unpaid

vendors claiming that restaurant leadership exploited progressive culture by marketing to socially responsible customers, all while treating their own employees poorly.

According to a media release by the group, Urban Forage intentionally understaffed its restaurants; ignored health and safety concerns of workers; and retaliated against those who spoke out against these conditions. The release also said that many former workers originally stayed with the company because of their idealized notions about a communal workplace with a global vision.

Urban Forage owner Tanya Einhorn, however, pointed out that she was running a business, not a collective.

"I disagree that I treat employees poorly," Einhorn told the B.A.R. earlier this month. "I'm simply not turning a profit. I didn't set this up as a nonprofit business. It's not a collective, and anybody who works there signs on for that. I don't make any false claims."

But the business may have had other things to worry about than a group of disgruntled people calling for a boycott. A negligence

page 18 ►

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Lyon-Martin makes changes for the future

by Zak Szymanski

Those wondering about the apparent lack of activity at Lyon-Martin Women's Health Services should know that the organization is actually quite busy during its monthlong break from providing primary care to the public. The clinic stopped seeing new patients and offering medical care about two weeks ago. It still provides case management and consultations to existing patients.

The clinic, located at 1748 Market Street, is undergoing structural changes so that it can begin to see more patients more frequently, according to Doretha Williams-Flournoy, executive director of Lyon-Martin, who added that the facility is looking to be operating in full swing again by early January.

"We are getting ready to step up to the plate to provide more services and make it easier for people to get into the clinic," Williams-Flournoy told the *Bay Area Reporter*. "We're making changes so that people can have same-day access to care, and we're recruiting new staff to be able to respond to the need."

The clinic is also re-energizing its lesbian-specific focus, she said, and was a part of last summer's *Sistahs Steppin' in Pride* in Oakland and will host a "Healing Vil-



Doretha Williams-Flournoy

lage" at next year's San Francisco LGBT Pride Festival.

Lyon-Martin - named for lesbian pioneers Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin - was founded in 1979 to respond to the specific health needs of lesbians. Annually, its services reach over 3,000 women and transgenders of all backgrounds who lack access to quality care. All patients are welcome regardless of their ability to pay.

Never a wealthy institution, the clinic has experienced scares in past years over budget cuts; its annual budget is \$1.2 million and the bulk of that comes from governmental funding. But this restructuring is not one of those

scares, said those who work closely with the organization. Nor has the clinic suddenly come into a cash windfall. The board is simply moving ahead with its plan to improve and expand services, with the idea that such a restructuring will actually save and raise money. Such a plan has been in the works for four years.

"We keep struggling with idea that we have to have money in order to make things happen. But we couldn't keep waiting for someone else to do this for us; we decided to start taking care of ourselves. Our board is responding to the concerns of the community and our donors are saying, 'You know what's best, go do it,'" said Williams-Flournoy, who added that seeing more patients, ultimately, will bring in more money. "We had structural limitations to how we operated and so we needed to change. We had 90 slots a month that were not being filled."

The clinic can also start to charge for services it was not able to in the past, as it begins to accept insurance for reimbursement of those fees. Normally, clients with insurance would go elsewhere or be charged a reduced rate based upon their income. The clinic was approved for PacificCare health insurance last year, and is looking to add on other third-party carriers as well.

page 19 ►

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There is no 4 pm Liturgy

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OPEN FORUM

Our wish list

As the holidays approach, we'd like to take this opportunity to pass along our wishes for the two major political parties.

The Democrats

We wish the Democrats had the backbone to stand for full equality.

After presidential candidate John Kerry locked up influential early endorsements from gay rights groups and media outlets (including this paper), he totally caved on same-sex marriage and truly lived up to his flip-flopping reputation. He was for equal rights, but not marriage. He supported various state constitutional amendments banning same-sex marriage, and then opposed some when he learned they would affect domestic partnership and other second-class rights for gay and lesbian couples negatively.

Democratic Senate and House members were of virtually no help to equality advocates, and in some cases (read: Senator Dianne Feinstein and Congressman Barney Frank) lashed out at progressive members of the party like San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom, who briefly allowed same-sex couples to wed. In short, the recent election cycle saw most Democrats running for cover and ducking the issue.

Now, as the party of the working class and disenfranchised Americans heads into the new year, it faces a true test of relevancy: the selection of a new national party leader. Early indications are that party leaders will do anything to prevent former Vermont Governor Howard Dean from assuming that duty, even as he is hands down the best person for the job. Dean's presidential campaign, when it was at its best last year, had a message and Dean had a vision for America. He stridently talked about his work not only balancing a state budget and providing health insurance to children, but of the need for equality for all. And he could talk the talk, because he signed the nation's first civil union law. Dean did not back down from discussing LGBT issues during the primaries and was a welcome relief to the Beltway's politics-as-usual.

Don't Democrats realize that the best person to head the party is someone who has a voice, and is not afraid to use it? We're

tired of the same old dance around the issue of fairness, and we suspect a lot of people, even some in the so-called red states, are too. People want honesty and conviction in their leaders. Kerry brought neither to his presidential campaign and instead projected confusion. He never could articulate why he wanted to be president. In contrast, Dean's mantra of "taking our country back" was clear, concise, and refreshing.

If the Democrats want to regain seats in the 2006 off-year elections, the party needs to look to an enthusiastic leader who can build on grassroots organizing and fundraising. Dean is that Democrat.

The Republicans

We wish the Republicans would end their hypocrisy.

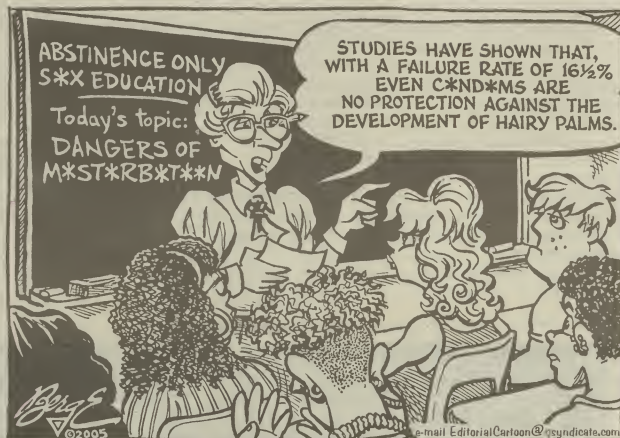
There are so many closeted gay GOPers in high levels of government that if they all came out, the party would have no choice but to embrace equal rights. We suspect that as the battle over same-sex marriage heats up in

Congress (and it will, with solid Republican majorities in both houses), some gay activists will continue their "outing" campaigns. This past year saw a couple congressmen outed and rumors are swirling about the new chair of the Republican National Committee. How these closet cases sleep at night is something we don't understand. How gay congressional staffers can watch their bosses eviscerate us over the airwaves and during congressional debates is beyond comprehension.

Right now, both President Bush and Vice President Cheney are on record as supporting states' rights governing same-sex relationships; and the president went so far as to support civil unions in comments made just before the election. Rather than mere lip service, gay GOPers, who are working for change within the party, need to increase their efforts at persuading the party to back off its homophobic platform and to embrace equal rights for everyone. The government doesn't need to be in our bedrooms, and the Republicans know it. ▼



Editorial



Strong leadership at HRC

by Scott Wiener and Amy Errett

The November 2 election and its aftermath have been challenging for our community. Between the re-election of George Bush, the passage of anti-LGBT ballot measures, and the blame directed at us for John Kerry's loss, we find ourselves playing defense. We at the Human Rights Campaign intend to change that dynamic. At the national, state, and local levels, HRC will play a proactive and collaborative role to move the nation toward full equality for LGBT people. HRC will continue to be the key LGBT player on Capitol Hill, will push for full relationship equality, will fight the Federal Marriage Amendment, will spend millions of dollars to elect fair-minded officials, and will build a premier field operation for future elections. HRC will also focus, like never before, on taking back religion from the radical right.

Unfortunately, several erroneous perceptions have developed about where HRC is heading as an organization. We wish to address those misperceptions.

Cheryl Jacques's departure had nothing to do with marriage or the election. Jacques resigned from HRC because of purely internal management disagreements. It just didn't work out. Jacques's departure had nothing to do with the election or with anyone's views on marriage. The board and Jacques, in fact, agreed about the need for marriage equality. Certain individuals have spread the false rumor that Jacques left because of differences with the board over marriage. This rumor is baseless.

HRC has supported and will continue to support full marriage equality. In places like California and Massachusetts, where mar-

riage is an achievable short-term objective, we will join with organizations like Equality California to push for marriage. In states where marriage is a longer-term achievable goal, but not realistic short-term, it may make sense to push for civil unions now and then achieve marriage later. In places where neither marriage nor civil unions are achievable at the moment, it may make sense to pursue short-term goals like hospital visitation rights. None of this changes the strategic goal: marriage everywhere for everyone. We simply need to be smart and context-specific about our short-term tactics.

HRC does not support privatization of Social Security. For some time, HRC has focused on the significant inequities facing LGBT seniors who receive Social Security. Whereas straight couples have Social Security survivorship rights, LGBT couples do not have those rights. This unfair distinction can be devastating to low-income LGBT seniors, and HRC is committed to eliminating it. If Congress undertakes an overhaul of Social Security, HRC will represent our community to ensure that our needs are considered. That does not mean that HRC supports privatization. We simply want our community to have a seat at the table when the conversation about Social Security occurs.

HRC works closely with and supports state and local organizations. HRC spends more than 20 percent of its budget on state-level activities. HRC's political action committee distributes millions of dollars to candidates around the country. HRC sends lobbyists and organizers to support state organizations' efforts. HRC gives out hundreds

of thousands of dollars in "equality grants" to state and local LGBT organizations, including our own Equality California. HRC contributed more than \$1 million to the campaigns against anti-LGBT state ballot measures this year. In Massachusetts, which faced a battle to preserve gay marriage without a statewide organization to lead the fight, HRC was instrumental in creating Massachusetts Equality, the umbrella organization that spearheaded the successful effort to preserve marriage.

Our community must continue to have a strong national LGBT organization. In light of the right-wing environment in our nation's capital, some have suggested that we may not need a large national LGBT organization. This suggestion could not be more wrong. The worst and most defeatist thing that our community could do now would be

to pull back from having a strong presence on the national level. Our enemies have national organizations with a combined annual budget of \$250 million. National LGBT organizations, by contrast, have a combined annual budget of \$50 million. We must strengthen, not weaken, our national organizations. Yes, it is important for our community to have strong state and local organizations. But, if we lack strength in Washington, many of those state and local efforts will be for naught. HRC's role is more important now than ever before. ▼

San Francisco residents Scott Wiener and Amy Errett are members of the Human Rights Campaign's national board of directors.

LETTERS

The passion of the theater

On Saturday afternoon, December 18, a large crowd confronts the embattled Castro Theatre, spilling into the street, partially blocking traffic. Who in Kansas would believe "Califilimians" could care so much about movies? If only civil liberties would excite such enthusiasm.

Tortuga Bi Liberty
San Francisco

Thanks from TARC

On behalf of our clients and volunteers, I'd like to thank Wayne Friday for choosing the Tenderloin AIDS Resource Center for his special holiday appeal "A Special Holiday Request" ["Democrats look for new leadership," *Our Man Friday*, December 16]. We are extremely grateful for his endorsement of our work to lessen the impact of HIV/AIDS and homelessness in the Tenderloin.

While TARC is always in need of donations, fortunately, we are in a financially healthy state and as a point of clarification, to avoid any confusion among your readers, we are nowhere near closing our doors. In fact, we have doubled our program capacity since 2001 and currently provide services to the Tenderloin community seven days a week. However, along with our increased capacity, greater needs emerge and our budget simply can't support the increase in the demand for services. TARC has seen a 274 percent increase in its client caseload since 2001. By the end of this year we will have had 6,000 residents accessing services, of which 1,200 are living with HIV and in need of our care. Almost 300 of the residents living with HIV are new to TARC in 2004. This is in part due to our ability to expand services to include weekends.

I also wanted to take this opportunity to say that it is very heartening and encouraging to see one of the eminent LGBT community newspapers once again shine a light on the needs of the most vulnerable among us. As a community, we cannot forget that since 2002 the Tenderloin has surpassed the Castro as the neighborhood with the largest number of new AIDS cases diagnosed in the city each year and many of these cases are comprised of a disproportionate number of our homeless and impoverished gay, bisexual and transgender sisters and brothers.

From everyone at TARC, thank you for your kindness and support.

Tracy L. Brown, Executive Director
Tenderloin AIDS Resource Center

Cheers to Huestis

Marc Huestis outdid himself with "A Judy Garland Christmas" December 17, a holiday treat that even he may not be able to top. But the fans who packed the Castro Theatre to see Margaret O'Brien and watch *Meet Me in St. Louis* aren't the only ones smiling. The evening was a benefit for The Family Link (www.thefamilylink.com), whose clients receive services all year long.

Thanks to support from friends like Marc, the Imperial Council, the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, and others, we are now entering our 20th year of giving hospitality and respite to families visiting loved ones with AIDS and other life-threatening illnesses and trauma — all without any government funding. We couldn't do it without them and everyone who supports their work.

Denis Wade
Vice President, Board of Directors
The Family Link

Cheers from Sachet

Thank you to the many people who made Donna Sachet's 12th annual "Songs of the Season" such an incredible success. A stellar cast of local and nationally known performers sang in the holiday season on Sunday and Monday, December 5 and 6, at the Empire Plush Room and the generosity of the audience made it possible for over \$15,000 to go to the SF AIDS Emergency Fund.

Special thanks go out to this year's benefactors, including Lucius Conrad, Fitz Fleming, Daddy's bar, The Edge, Mike Floyd and Dean Carrico, Dave Morey, Joe Granese, Werner Tillinger, Community Thrift Store, Assemblyman Mark Leno, Empress Marlena, Empress Suzie Wong, Todd Jackman, Russell Kassman, and Brenda Barnett and Marguerite Judson. This year's show was fittingly dedicated to the memory of Bob Ross, longtime supporter of the event, and could never have progressed so flawlessly without the organizational skills of Richard Sablatura and the encouragement of Bob Brunson. Thank you to the community that is always there for me!

Donna Sachet
San Francisco

Dump Tina

Over the years San Francisco has engaged in educational and awareness campaigns about crystal meth use. "Dump Tina" is a new campaign and is a bit different from educational Web sites and billboards. By wearing a "Dump Tina" button gay men can take a

stand and make a simple and powerful personal statement.

It is a dynamic way to affect change one man at a time. By dumping Tina we are not dumping our gay brothers who are caught in Tina's grip. Instead, we are saying crystal meth is not a recreational drug, and we've had enough of the devastations and wasted lives of bright and talented gay men. So, wear a button and tell Tina she is no longer welcome in our community.

Francis Salmeri
San Francisco

Thanks for support

As the hosts and organizing committee for the December 11 fundraising benefit "Hickory Holidays 2004 Salutes Raising Colors," we would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank the local community for its generous support. Through individual donations, commercial support, cocktail party attendance receipts, and silent auction, we were able to contribute over \$18,000 to the Raising Colors organization. We would also like to thank the San Francisco Pride Organization and Teddy Witherington for invaluable guidance and support in this initial fund raising endeavor.

The funds raised will help achieve our goal of establishing a stable financial base to sustain the annual June Pride month display of rainbow flags along Market Street. For the past 21 years, Raising Colors has mounted this spectacular display of 320 six by ten foot rainbow flags from the Embarcadero to the Castro. If you are like most San Franciscans, you may have thought that the city of San Francisco was responsible for this display. Now you know! We hope to continue our annual rainbow flag project for years to come, as a symbol of the pride we all share in our community and as an inspiration to all those from around the world who experience this event.

For additional information about Raising Colors or to donate to this project, please contact us at our Web site: www.raisingcolors.com.

Carl Hack and Jeff Mauk, Benefit Hosts
Clyde Wildes, Raising Colors Founder
Daniel Healy and Michael Ackerman,
Benefit Co-chairs

The jackass party

Post mortems on the November elections fail to see past the hoopla and lies of the two parties and thus don't address the real political questions facing our community.

The problem is that some people project their politics onto the Democrats and confuse the members and supporters with the leaders of the Democratic Party. Those are very different kinds of people — they are as unlike as disoriented victims and jackasses can be. This is analogous to projecting one's emotions on someone not quite so in love. Beware the fall.

Democrats certainly want gay votes, and will promise anything to get them, but in reality our agenda isn't something they'd ever work up a sweat over. On the contrary, they're characterized by duplicity and deceit. For 200 years they've promised everything but delivered only for themselves and the rich.

In spite of Stonewall daydreams and HRC perfidy, and of their promises, the work done for them and money given them, the leaders of the jackass party are not our allies — quite the opposite. Clinton and the congressional jackasses approved "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" and led the effort to put the first national antigay marriage law on the books. John Kerry caved on gay marriage, paving the way for state antigay marriage laws. In Michigan, Governor Jennifer Granholm happily betrayed us to the bigots, taking back state benefits from gay families. That's shoddy, hypocritical, and cowardly, but hey, they're jackasses, what did you expect?

The truth is that the Republicans unashamedly hate us, while Democrats put an arm around us, call us friend, and only later comes the trip to the ER to treat those stab wounds in the back.

Even now the jackasses talk about having gone too far in supporting gays, and say over-identification with us is the kiss of death. In our own ranks fear has set in because of the passage of antigay marriage acts in several states.

Secondly, and not downplaying the danger of the Christian right wing, we've made remarkable progress in changing laws and how people view us. Not because we've been timid, but because we've fought for decades — on the job, in school, in the armed forces, in the courts, and in demonstrations big and small.

We need to vote for our supporters, not our betrayers or our enemies. We need to vote for communist or socialist candidates who support us and we need to back efforts to create a labor party in the U.S., like Canada's NDP or the English Labor Party. A party like that could unite all the groups now wasting their votes between Tweedledum and Tweedledee and provide some real progress for a change. And, let's face it, not having to vote for evil, even a lesser evil, would feel so good.

Bill Perdue
Las Vegas, Nevada

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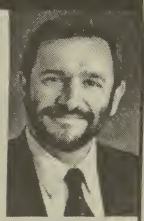
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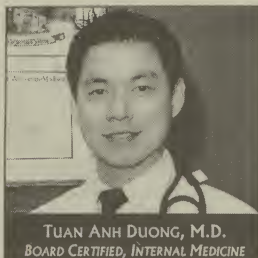
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A season for giving

by Gwendolyn Ann Smith

They say the holidays are the season of giving, yet many transfolks will go wanting this year.

For many, the holidays mean that old wounds surrounding the loss of family and friends are opened once more, or we end up with those in our life who – while not totally turning away from us – still refuse to accept who and what we are.

There are worse troubles. For some transgender folks, the holiday season will be spent in a homeless shelter, or with the barest of holiday cheer. Our younger members may have been turned out of their homes, while others might be struggling through joblessness brought upon them thanks to their gender identity or expression. They may be left to live on the streets of this and other cities, and for them there may be no holiday to celebrate.

Things can be worse still. This will be the third year that Gwen Araujo will not celebrate the holidays with her family. Not in body, anyway. There are many others who, like Gwen, will never see the holiday season again.

It is a pretty bleak picture to paint during a holiday typically associated with hope and joy. I apologize, but it is also reality. These aren't things happening in some far-off place – but right here, in our own back yards.

This year, while I struggle through this so-called economic recovery, I can take comfort knowing that I have a roof over my head, food in my stomach, and even a few presents to give this Yule. It has not always been the case.

I've lived through some tough times. One year the only thing I had to mark the season was a sickly pine tree, gained for free from a nearby "big box" store. I had a roof over my head, but my hold on that was scant at best. I had no family to speak of that holiday season. Indeed, it was one of the lowest points in my life.

I would not have made it through that time, I suspect, without the support of others. I had some good friends who helped me to pay my rent and utilities. I had others who did what they could just to help keep my spirits up.

That spring, things turned around for me, but that was a winter I could not have survived without the gifts of others.

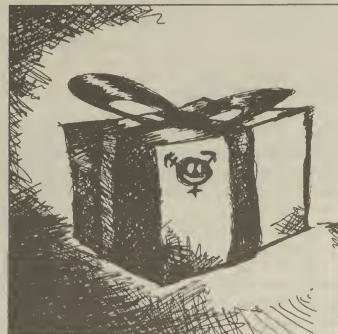
That is why I painted such a bleak picture at the beginning of this missive. You may be doing well this holiday season, and life may be pretty good. I certainly hope that it is, trust me.

As the world has largely become more accepting of transgender people – certain religious right organizations aside – more of us are not facing joblessness and homelessness as we once did. For some of us out there, we may even be lucky enough to have an employer whose health benefits will cover all or part of whatever we may need to feel comfortable with ourselves. If you are one of these folks, please take a moment to count your lucky stars this holiday season. Yet, after you do so, consider those less fortunate.

I not asking you to do much. If you happen to know of any transgender folks who are in need, lend them a hand. Give a little so that they may make it by. A few dollars can always help – but so can a warm meal, a good coat or blanket for those out on the street, or just a few kind words of encouragement if that is all you can spare. We are, after all, a community – and we need to take care of our own.

You can also look at giving on a large scale. Consider some of the transgender organizations out there. They are doing what they can to make things a little better. Perhaps you can send in a membership or a donation to some of the many fine groups working for you and those like you.

The National Center for Transgender Equality, Female To Male International, the International Foundation for Gender Education, Gender Education and Advocacy, and the National Transgender Advocacy Coalition are just four groups that come to mind. They are all working to better our place in this society, and are worthy of your donation. I'd



Christine Smith

also suggest you further the work of projects like the Transgender Law Center or my own Remembering Our Dead project – or any other local transgender organization you feel like supporting.

I mentioned Gwen Araujo above, and I would be remiss in not mentioning the Gwen Araujo Memorial Fund for Transgender Education, which is administered via the Horizons Foundation.

You don't have to restrict gifts to trans organizations. The larger LGBT rights organizations are also working for transgender folks. Consider the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, or some of the many other groups out there. All of the above can be found on the Internet.

Giving can be anything you want it to be. You may not be in a position where you have much to give monetarily – but consider giving of your time. Most trans groups always need a helping hand from time to time, and maybe you can bring something to the table they've not had before.

You can even just give a smile, a handshake, a hug. Just show someone out there that you care. When I was facing my biggest challenges, it was knowing that I wasn't alone that helped keep me going.

They say the holidays are the season of giving – so let's give. ▼

Gwen Smith believes in full disclosure, and is part of Gender Education and Advocacy and the founder of the Remembering Our Dead project. You can find her on the World Wide Web at www.gwensmith.com.

Warm coats for the holidays



Jane Philomen Celand

From left, Joel Lopez, Tate Alexander Riley, and Ben Schaeffer don warm coats donated by Out of the Closet thrift store Saturday, December 18. Assemblyman Mark Leno (D-San Francisco) helped spearhead the holiday coat drive for homeless and needy queer youth, with assistance from the LGBT Community Center and the Lavender Youth Recreation and Information Center. Clothing donations are welcome at Out of the Closet, which has three locations in San Francisco and a store in Berkeley. For more information, visit www.aidshealth.org.etc.

POLITICS

Bush is set to reconstruct high court

by Wayne Friday

It might have been different – a win in Ohio for Democrat **John Kerry** instead of **George W. Bush** taking the state and its 20 electoral votes would have made Kerry the president-elect. Instead, Bush took Ohio by less than 120,000 votes out of 5.6 million cast in that state and now gets to pack the U.S. Supreme Court for at least a generation. The process is reportedly well under way at the White House, even before Bush takes the oath of his second term.

With all but one of the current U.S. Supreme Court justices (**Clarence Thomas**) older than 65, and with Chief Justice **William Rehnquist** reportedly so ill that he will retire soon after he swears in Bush next month, the president likely will appoint another arch-conservative, antigay, abortion foe to replace Rehnquist, so that won't change the court much, but it is the expected next two vacancies – **John Paul Stevens**, 84, and **Sandra Day O'Connor**, 74 – that would seriously alter the high court's stance on a number of cases where the current court voted 5-4, like last year's decision upholding some affirmative action.

It is all but certain that Bush will have at least three justices to appoint during his second term – probably sooner rather than later – and his expected conservative appointees will most certainly change the high court's stance on issues like abortion, gay rights, affirmative action, the role of religion in public life, and many others. The two most conservative justices on the court – once Rehnquist is gone – are **Thomas** and **Antonin Scalia**, both of whom have long fought *Roe v. Wade*, the abortion rights decision, and bitterly opposed the court's 6-3 gay rights decision last year. **Scalia** and **Thomas**, the two who Bush has publicly said he most admires, have etched out a very ambitious conservative agenda in their dissents, an agenda that would most certainly curtail economic regulation, severely diminish limits on private property use, and eliminate congressional authority over the states, to name a few.

The only slight hope Americans have of Bush not packing the U.S. Supreme Court rests with the fact that Democrats, while in a distinct minority in the Senate, can still muster a filibuster against any nominee. It still requires 60 votes in the Senate to cut off a filibuster and a Democratic member of the Senate Judiciary Committee said last week that Democrats had been assured of support from moderate Republicans if Bush attempts to name a hardliner like **Thomas** or **Scalia** to the high court.

There are other problems as well. If either **O'Connor**, who has battled cancer in the past and has said she wants to quit, or perhaps **Anthony Kennedy** – two conservatives who have nevertheless backed abortion and gay rights – should resign, the Bush White House will fight like hell to pressure Senator **Arlen Specter** (R-Pennsylvania), the new chair of the



Chief Justice William Rehnquist

Senate Judiciary Committee, to allow ultra-conservatives to be confirmed to the high court. Senator **Charles Schumer** (D-New York) warned this week that Democrats would not back down and would indeed turn to the filibuster if necessary on nominees to the Supreme Court. "Our hope is that the president will nominate people in the mainstream, whether to the right of center, or the left of center, and work with us in getting that kind of justice," Schumer said, "as long as there's a view that they would interpret the law and not try to make it be an ideology."

Chief Justice Rehnquist's resignation along with another resignation,

thereby allowing for the appointment of a second conservative abortion foe, would give the anti-abortion, antigay **Scalia** and **Thomas** just what they need to alter the high court for decades. It doesn't look good.

Politics and people

District 3 Supervisor **Aaron Peskin** is set to become the new president of the Board of Supervisors next month, and he's one of the smartest, hardest-working people on that body; outgoing President **Matt Gonzalez's** calm soft-spoken demeanor will be missed, however.

Reveille for Rummy? With calls for Secretary of Defense **Donald Rumsfeld's** resignation starting to come from numerous GOP Senate members, as well as a number of Democrats, many in Washington feel that despite the fact President Bush admires him, Rumsfeld is on his way out at the Pentagon. When Arizona Senator **John McCain**, already off and running for the 2008 GOP nomination, says that while he appreciates that the president "can have the team that he wants around him ... I have no confidence in Rumsfeld," well, you can start counting the weeks.

I'm not certain, but by the time you read this we just might have learned which party won the governor's race in Washington state. The Republicans convinced a judge last week to block officials from counting several hundred newly-discovered, uncounted ballots in heavily-Democratic King County (Seattle), despite the fact that the Republican nominee, **Dino Rossi**, was leading Democrat **Christine Gregoire** by a mere 43 votes. Democrats were headed to the Washington state Supreme Court at my deadline.

Happy holidays

I hardly saw it go by, but it is that time of the year when I really

want to wish the best of the holiday season to many people who appear in this column during the year (and some who don't) but all of whom I wish the happiest and healthiest of holidays for – people like **Dennis & Anne Herrera**; **Kamala Harris**; **Gavin Newsom & Kimberly Guilfoyle Newsom**; **Dennis Collins**; **Mick Ridolfi**; **Mike Hennessey**; **Joe Caruso**; **Connie O'Connor**; **Morgan Gorrone & Jonathan Chiu**; **Mark Leno**; **Carole Migden & Cris Arguedas**; **Robert Ortega**; **Jack Davis & Don Canady**; **Connie Perry**; **Ron Huberman**; **Cecil Williams & Jan Mirikitani**; **Bob Hartnagel**; **Tom Horn & Caesar Alexander**; **Anna Damiani**; **Greg Holland & Tracy Brown**; **Jim Dewey**; **Bevan Duffy**; **Ken Irvine**; **Aaron Peskin**; **Dianne Feinstein & Richard Blum**; **Chuck Limbert**; **Rod McKuen**; **Michael O'Malley**; **Jose Cisneros & Mark Kelleher**; **Les Natali** & the staff at **Badlands**; **Shawn Hassler**; **Kay Tsenin**; **Rebecca Prozan**; **Jeff Sheehy**; **Carolene Marks**; **Jeff Adachi**; **Chuck Haines & Duncan Fox**; **Warren Hinckle & Linda Corso**; **Bruce Vilanch**; **Ellen Chaitin & V. Roy Lefcourt**; **Steve Cox**; the staff at **The Mix** on 18th Street; **Richard Walters**; **John Laird**; **Bob Golovich**; **Sharon McNight**; **Marc Huestis**; **Matthew Rothschild**; **Ted Fang & Tony**; **Greta Grass**; **Mindy Pengel**; **Kevin McCarthy & David**; **Hank Plante**; **Don Rogers & the gang at Ginger's Trois**; **Ed Petrillo & Eric Johnson**; **Phil Matier**; **Nancy & Paul Pelosi**; **Andy Ross**; **Jeff and the Twin Peaks staff**; **Jim Rivaldo**; **Richard, Mario**, and the staff at the **Metro**; **Dick Deemer & Ramon**; **Paul Melbostad**; the wonderful **Marlena** and the staff at **Marlena's**; **Dan Nicoletta**; **Ron Ross**; **Duke Smith**; **Mike Polansky**; **Lea Militello**; **Joe Bannon**; **Fiona Ma**; **Arlo Smith**; **Jane Howell**; **Tom Ammann**; **Katherine Feinstein & Rick Mariano**; **Jon Kouba**; **Angelo Quaranta & Pamela Berman**; **Bob Sykes**; **Mabel Teng**; **Steve Kawa**; **Lawrence Wong**; **Milton Marks**; **Susan Leal**; **Bart Dryer**; **Steven Underhill**; **Nick Mills**; **Marge Poscher**; the great staff at **Daddy's bar** on **Castro**; **Bruce Pettit**; **Mike Sullivan**; **Chris Bowman**; **Barbara Taylor**; **Joe, Dolores & the gang at Aunt Charley's**; **Sophie Maxwell**; **Kriss Worthington**; **Randy Alfred**; **Matt Gonzalez**; **Frank Jordan & Wendy Paskin**; **Hank Wilson**; **Douglas Graves**; **Louise & Paul Renne**; **Frederick Hobson**; **Leslie Katz**; **John McCullum**; **Bryan James**; **Mitch Katz**; **Clint & Janet Reilly**; **Frank Robinson**; **Art Torres**; **Rink**; **Dave Tussey**; **Greg Flores & Michael**; **Allen White**; **Keith Lesnick**; **Jack "Irene" McGowan**; **Steven Rascher**; **Lillian Sing**; **Tom Soucie**; **Michael Weiss**; **Peter Nardoza**; **Angela Alioto**; **Jay Noonan**; **Heather Fong**; **Bill Barnes**; **Greg Bronstein**; **Eileen Hirst**; **Sean Elsbernd**; **John Newmeyer**; **Wade Crowfoot**; **Michela Alioto-Pier**; **Ken Allison & Duffy**; and so many others I can't remember at the moment who have made my year (but I'll surely hear about it later) – but especially to **Cynthia**, **Mike**, **David**, **Elsa** and the rest of the always loyal staff at the *Bay Area Reporter*. Happy, healthy, holidays one and all, and, thanks. ▼



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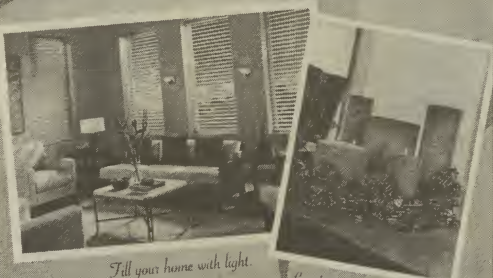
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Whither HRC?

by Dale Carpenter

Is the Human Rights Campaign over? The year 2004 was not kind to the country's leading national gay rights organization. It stumbled badly on the three essential P's of a civil rights organization: people, policy, and politics. It needs to address its deficiencies in all three areas if it is to be an effective voice for gay equality.

Start with HRC's leadership crisis. For years, HRC was guided by the articulate, intelligent, and moderate-sounding Elizabeth Birch. She helped transform the group into a real political powerhouse, dramatically enlarging its staff and budget, and for the most part guided it successfully among the tricky shoals of Washington politics.

But Birch stepped down in early 2004 and was replaced by Cheryl Jacques, a Democratic state legislator from Massachusetts. Jacques was newly out of the closet and had no experience in Washington politics. But she seemed like a quick study.

By all accounts, the choice was terrible. Jacques had a management style that irked HRC's staff. As a partisan Democrat, she seems to have had no taste for the compromise so essential in a Capitol dominated by a party hostile to her cause. Her rhetoric was often shrill; worse, she presided over some truly dreadful policy shifts and political maneuvers.

Next, consider policy. In the summer of 2004, after years of principled resistance, HRC announced that it would not support the legislative centerpiece of the national gay rights movement, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, unless it protected transgenders as well as gays from job discrimination. This decision followed years of protest against HRC on the issue by transgender activists and gay leftists.

The reason for HRC's previous unwillingness to add transgender protections to ENDA was obvious: adding "gender identity" would greatly weaken the prospect of passing the bill anytime soon. Jacques penned a column for the gay media defending the about-face for two reasons. First, she offered a lot of blather about respecting the movement's "diversity," as though effectively killing ENDA would enhance diversity. Second, she argued that protec-



Former HRC prez Cheryl Jacques

tion for gays would be incomplete without protection for transgenders. This appeal to gays' self-interest was untrue, as any honest person familiar with the law should know.

Most irresponsibly, HRC made this symbolic gesture apparently without conducting any research about what its political impact would be. How many congressional sponsors might be lost? How many moderate Republicans and even Democrats would support a transgender-

inclusive ENDA? We were never told. When HRC insisted for the first time in 2004 that senators sign a non-discrimination pledge including "gender identity," fewer senators signed the pledge than when it had previously included only "sexual orientation." Under Jacques, HRC had done exactly what it resisted doing under Birch: it had sacrificed practical goals for therapeutic grandstanding.

Finally, consider politics. In 2004, HRC sounded and acted in a more partisan Democratic fashion than ever before. Part of this can be attributed to how bad the Republicans have become, especially with the GOP push for a Federal Marriage Amendment. But HRC overreacted, endorsing John Kerry in the spring of 2004 and thus ending any leverage its endorsement might have given it over him.

That leverage would have come in handy. Kerry backed a state constitutional amendment in Massachusetts to end gay marriage there, said he had "no problem" with a similar measure on the ballot in Missouri, waffled on the ban on gays in the military, hardly ever even used the word

"gay" during the campaign, and never repeated his earlier-stated support for pro-gay measures like ENDA. On gay issues, he was the worst Democratic nominee since Michael Dukakis. But HRC had nothing to say about these matters during the campaign.

The other big political mistake was HRC's failure to endorse the most important gay-friendly Republican in the Senate, Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania. Specter is hated by social conservatives for his pro-gay policy positions, including his opposition to the FMA. He's also in line to become chair of the important Senate Judiciary Committee, which vets judicial nominees.

So why no HRC endorsement? Because Specter voted for a motion to close debate and bring the FMA up for a vote in the Senate. Voting against this procedural "cloture" became the be-all and end-all of HRC's endorsement process (except when it came to the national Democratic nominees, who didn't even bother to show up for the vote). It was a wooden and silly decision with ramifications we have yet to appreciate.

Can anything be done to save HRC from the political wilderness? Here are three suggestions. First, HRC should hire a Republican executive director. This will be unpopular among gay leftists, but it should help repair relations with Republicans like Specter and help moderate the group's image and rhetoric in a national political climate likely to be dominated by the GOP for some time.

Second, HRC should back off on transgender inclusion in ENDA. HRC can offer the excuse that it had not fully gauged how much opposition there would be to the move. To quell the outcry on the left, have a member of Congress introduce a separate transgender-inclusive bill supported by HRC.

Third, refocus time and energy on state issues and legislatures. In the current climate, little can be done at the national level except to fend off antigay proposals. The real action has moved to the states.

Alas, HRC seems unlikely to do any of these things and so its distressing slide into irrelevance will probably continue. ▼

Dale Carpenter is a law professor. He can be reached at OutRight@aol.com. Some of his past columns can be read at www.indegayforum.com.

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Gay advocates back CDC marriage study

by Kevin Davis

A variety of marriage equality activists and gay medical professionals believe that a government report released December 15 showing that married adults are healthier mentally and physically than non-married ones provides further evidence for legalizing same-sex marriage.

The advocates observed that both from a legal standpoint and as a symbol of commitment, couples feel more support in their efforts to stay healthy, have greater access to sharing employer domestic partner health care benefits, and are not as likely to feel lonely, an emotion that often leads to drug abuse and depression.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Statistics report, "Marital Status and Health: U.S., 1999-2002," based on interviews with 127,545 adults, showed that married adults are less likely than others to suffer poor health, headaches, serious psychological distress, heavy drinking, smoking, are less likely to be limited in work, or physically inactive. Couples who are not married but living together face likelier health problems than those who are married. However, married men are more likely to be overweight than single men, the study found.

A CDC spokeswoman said the agency did not ask the sex of the interviewees' partners.

Since 1997 field workers for the National Center for Health Statis-

tics have allowed respondents to self-identify their marital status. They ask the household's one adult, "Do you consider yourself married?" among the array of categories from which they can choose.

"The only thing that matters to us is what they tell us," said Sandy Smith, a CDC press officer. "It all depends on what people are able and willing to share."

In the CDC sampling design, categorized by age, race, education, and economic status, the lack of cross sectional collection data left undetermined the reasons why married people are healthier. Because the surveyor only sees the subject once, they cannot determine whether marriage protects health or, in the marital selection theory, healthy people get married.

"We can't make comments about the cause," said Charlotte Schoenborn, the report's author.

Schoenborn conducted her last marital status survey in the 1980s, although the CDC has sampled demographics since the late 1950s, releasing annual summary health statistics identifying different major patterns, such as the number of adults with asthma, disabilities, and diabetes.

Gay rights advocates said the study supports the importance of same-sex marriage.

"It underscores the illogic and injustice of denying gay people the security, protection, and responsibility that comes with marriage," said Evan Wolfson, executive director of Freedom to Marry and



GLMA interim dir. Joel Ginsberg

author of *Why Marriage Matters: America, Equality and Gay People's Right to Marry*. "It helps encourage people to care for one another and build happier and healthier lives, in general," and "helps create a structure of supports."

Joel Ginsberg, interim executive director of the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association, believes research illustrating the link between well-being and gay marriage is overdue.

"We know that married people are more likely to have access to health care through their partner's health insurance benefits," said Ginsberg. He added that Virginia recently enacted legislation banning companies from providing health benefits to same-sex couples, even invalidating private contracts.

The link between loneliness

and drug use comes into play as well, explained pediatrician Dr. Kenneth Haller, immediate past president of GLMA.

"If you're in a place in your life where you feel secure in your relationship, you're not as likely to want to reach for a cigarette," said Haller.

"We know that lesbians and gays experience demonstrated disparities such as higher rates of smoking and depression," added Ginsberg.

But marriage advocates all name similar reasons why — without attributing drinking and smoking directly — the sense of security and corresponding lack of stress bestowed from legal marriage rights and benefits would favor healthier LGBT marrieds.

The population surveyed in Schoenborn's study — in all demographics of race, gender, and class — parallel a cross section of the LGBT community.

Most medical studies, including the CDC's, have not specifically addressed relationships in the LGBT population.

"Sometimes we have to go with the best available evidence," said Haller. "It would make sense for gay and lesbian people to get married. In the absence of a same-sex study, we can generalize from this study that it would make sense."

The kids

Children of same-sex parents who can't marry are often caught in the legal crosshairs.

Jessie Carr, an organizer for Children of Lesbians and Gays

Everywhere, was one of several people who addressed couples' fear for their children in times of catastrophic crisis.

Carr said he receives frantic e-mails from parents in states lacking domestic partner recognition or who don't have a lawyer to obtain rights to shared custody, taxes, and hospitals visits.

"Custody creates the most distress, the fear of losing your children to a hostile family," said Carr. "If the partner leaves, or if they are injured or killed, the non-biological parent has no way of gaining recognition. A tax situation is annoying, but not as much as the idea of losing your kid."

Ron Schlittler, interim executive director of Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, observes a direct correlation between the illegitimacy of gay marriage and adolescent's self-esteem.

"One thing that's critically important to our young people just becoming aware of their same-sex attraction — teaching them to remain abstinent until marriage — is that education has a negative health impact for people who will never be allowed to marry," said Schlittler. "They are being defined out of the conversion. Talk about ways to isolate and marginalize."

"I think it would certainly take some of the strains of no [marriage] recognition off, especially if children are involved," said Dr. Mary Barber, vice president of the Association of Gay and Lesbian Psychiatrists. "There is constant worry about who takes care of the

page 19 ►

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LGBT health issues in 2004

by Bob Roehr

AIDS remained the number one health concern within the LGBT community. The news was modestly good on the medical side with new drugs advancing in the pipeline and coming to market, though nothing to significantly change the standard of care for the disease.

HIV became costlier to treat with the 400 percent price increase for Norvir (ritonavir) that Abbott Laboratories introduced in December 2003. The drug is used primarily to "boost" other protease inhibitors by slowing their clearance through the liver.

Many of the nation's leading AIDS physicians formed an ad hoc group to protest the increase and boycott the company, an action that continues to this day. Opponents of the increase claimed it was an attempt by Abbott to gain market share at the expense of its competitors. They said the company had not invested any money in developing this use and it was cutting back on other AIDS research.

The National Institutes of Health contributed \$3.5 million to the very early development of ritonavir and owns key patents on the drug, which it licenses to Abbott. In May, because of the price increase and based on a petition asking it to do so, the NIH held a meeting to consider whether to initiate a never before used regulation and allow other companies to produce the drug. In the end it decided not to do so.

"Facial lipotrophy has become the scarlet letter of AIDS,"



AIDS activists demonstrate outside the Republican National Committee office in Washington, D.C. in May.

veteran San Francisco AIDS physician Marcus Conant told a Food and Drug Administration advisory committee at the end of March. "It is the thing that is bothering our patients the most ... even doctors wait to start their medication." Nearly half of all patients experience a degree of facial lipotrophy within three years of beginning therapy.

The FDA meeting discussed Sculptura, an injectable material used to fill in and restore those facial ravages. The FDA approved its use in August.

As the cost of treating HIV continued to increase, so did the number of people seeking government help in gaining access to those medicines and services. Federal funding did not keep pace.

State AIDS Drug Assistance Programs, financed largely by the federal government with additional contributions by some states, were hardest hit. Close to

half of the programs experienced waiting lists; a tightening of eligibility requirements; or cut backs in the number of drugs covered.

In California, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger agreed to fully fund ADAP. Assemblyman John Laird (D-Santa Cruz) led the effort to keep the funding in the state budget.

The Bush administration found an emergency \$20 million for the program, which advocates called a Band-Aid to help cover over the problems until after the election.

May saw large-scale AIDS demonstrations return to Capitol Hill for the first time in years to press for increased funding. It did little good. A combination of tax cuts and the war in Iraq squeezed revenue, and most social programs took hits. The increases for AIDS barely kept pace with inflation and fell short of meeting the continually growing need.

AIDS protesters were also part of a huge wave of demonstrators that took to the streets in New York City during the Republican convention in late August.

Safer sex

There were disturbing signs that the practice of safer sex continued to erode within the gay community.

In March, the explosion of syphilis among gay and bisexual men caused the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to sound the alarm. They "probably account for more than 60 percent of all current syphilis cases in the U.S.," said Ronald O. Valdiserri, deputy director of the CDC's National Center for HIV, STD and TB Prevention. Five years ago MSM constituted only 5 percent of all syphilis cases.

Crystal methamphetamine is believed to be the driving force behind the increased syphilis

numbers in gay men, even while the disease is declining among other populations in the United States.

The spread of drug-resistant gonorrhea prompted the CDC to change its guidelines for treating that infection in gay men but not in heterosexuals. The revisions, released at the end of April, called for a switch from Cipro to the antibiotics ceftriaxone and cefixime.

Tobacco and pot

"Lesbian/bisexual girls were more than six times more likely to have smoked in the past month and almost 10 times more likely to have smoked at least weekly in the past year, compared with heterosexual girls," according to a study by researchers at Children's Hospital in Boston, released in April.

Fortunately the federal government has begun to fund local programs to urge lesbians to stop smoking and to help them to do so.

In San Francisco, the California LGBT Tobacco Education Partnership officially opened its doors October 7. The collaborative has its office in the LGBT Community Center.


The fight for medical use of marijuana won a victory in April when a California judge barred federal law enforcement officials from harassing those growing or using marijuana for use with terminal illness.

The victory may be short-lived, however. In November the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments on the ruling upon which that decision was based, and the justices did not appear to be very sympathetic to the legal arguments. A decision is likely in the spring. ▼

*Happy holidays from
all of us here at the BAY AREA REPORTER*



Caesar Alexander



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Reyataz does not cure HIV or help prevent passing HIV to others.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION:

Do not take Reyataz if you are taking the following medicines: ergot medicines, Versed®, Halcion®, Orap®, Propulsid®, Camptosar®, Crixivan®, Mevacor®, Zocor®, rifampin, St. John's wort, Aciphex®, Nexium®, Prevacid®, Prilosec® or Protonix®. Do not use Viagra®, Levitra®, Cialis®, or Vfend® while you are taking Reyataz without first speaking with your healthcare provider. **This list of medicines is not complete. Discuss all prescription and non-prescription medicines, vitamin and herbal supplements, or other health preparations you are taking or plan to take with your healthcare provider.**

Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any side effects or conditions, including the following:

- **A change in the way your heart beats** may occur and could be a symptom of a heart problem.
- **Diabetes and high blood sugar** may occur in patients taking protease inhibitor medicines like Reyataz.
- **Yellowing of the skin and/or eyes** may occur due to increases in bilirubin levels in the blood (bilirubin is made by the liver).
- **Rash** (redness and itching) sometimes occurs in patients taking Reyataz, most often in the first few weeks after the medicine is started, and usually goes away within two weeks with no change in treatment.
- **If you have liver disease**, including hepatitis B or C, your liver disease may get worse when you take anti-HIV medicines like Reyataz.
- **Some patients with hemophilia** have increased bleeding problems with protease inhibitor medicines like Reyataz.

Changes in body fat have been seen in some patients taking anti-HIV medicines. The cause and long-term effects are not known at this time.

Common side effects of Reyataz taken with other anti-HIV medicines include: nausea, headache, stomach pain, vomiting, diarrhea, depression, fever, dizziness, trouble sleeping, numbness, and tingling or burning of hands or feet.

You should take Reyataz once daily with food (a meal or snack). You should take Reyataz and your other anti-HIV medicines exactly as instructed by your healthcare provider.

Please see important information about REYATAZ on the next page.

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- ◆ Low chance of diarrhea (shown in clinical trials)†
- ◆ Two pills taken once-a-day (with a snack or meal)‡

* Undetectable is defined as a viral load of less than 400 or 50 copies/mL (depending on the test used).

† REYATAZ in combination therapy had a 1-3% rate of moderate-to-severe diarrhea.

‡ People who have taken anti-HIV medicines before usually take REYATAZ with ritonavir once daily as part of their HIV combination therapy.

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REYATAZ®
(atazanavir sulfate) 150 mg/200 mg capsules

PATIENT INFORMATION

Rx ONLY

REYATAZ® (RAY-ah-taz)

(generic name = atazanavir sulfate) Capsules

ALERT: Find out about medicines that should NOT be taken with REYATAZ. Read the section "What important information should I know about taking REYATAZ with other medicines?"

Read the Patient Information that comes with REYATAZ before you start using it and each time you get a refill. There may be new information. This leaflet provides a summary about REYATAZ and does not include everything there is to know about your medicine. This information does not take the place of talking with your healthcare provider about your medical condition or treatment.

What is REYATAZ?

REYATAZ is a prescription medicine used with other anti-HIV medicines to treat people who are infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). HIV is the virus that causes acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS). REYATAZ is a type of anti-HIV medicine called a protease inhibitor. HIV infection destroys CD4+ (T) cells, which are important to the immune system. The immune system helps fight infection. After a large number of T cells are destroyed, AIDS develops. REYATAZ helps to block HIV protease, an enzyme that is needed for the HIV virus to multiply. REYATAZ may lower the amount of HIV in your blood, help your body keep its supply of CD4+ (T) cells, and reduce the risk of death and illness associated with HIV.

Does REYATAZ cure HIV or AIDS?

REYATAZ does not cure HIV infection or AIDS. At present there is no cure for HIV infection. People taking REYATAZ may still get opportunistic infections or other conditions that happen with HIV infection. Opportunistic infections are infections that develop because the immune system is weak. Some of these conditions are pneumonia, herpes virus infections, and *Mycobacterium avium* complex (MAC) infections. It is very important that you see your healthcare provider regularly while taking REYATAZ.

REYATAZ does not lower your chance of passing HIV to other people through sexual contact, sharing needles, or being exposed to your blood. For your health and the health of others, it is important to always practice safer sex by using a latex or polyurethane condom or other barrier to lower the chance of sexual contact with semen, vaginal secretions, or blood. Never use or share dirty needles.

Who should not take REYATAZ?

Do not take REYATAZ if you:

- are taking certain medicines. (See "What important information should I know about taking REYATAZ with other medicines?") Serious life-threatening side effects or death may happen. Before you take REYATAZ, tell your healthcare provider about all medicines you are taking or planning to take. These include other prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.
- are allergic to REYATAZ or to any of its ingredients. The active ingredient is atazanavir sulfate. See the end of this leaflet for a complete list of ingredients in REYATAZ. Tell your healthcare provider if you think you have had an allergic reaction to any of these ingredients.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before I take REYATAZ?

Tell your healthcare provider:

- if you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant. It is not known if REYATAZ can harm your unborn baby. Pregnant women have experienced serious side effects when taking REYATAZ with other HIV medicines called nucleoside analogues. You and your healthcare provider will need to decide if REYATAZ is right for you. If you use REYATAZ while you are pregnant, talk to your healthcare provider about the Antiretroviral Pregnancy Registry.
- if you are breast-feeding. You should not breast-feed if you are HIV-positive because of the chance of passing HIV to your baby. Also, it is not known if REYATAZ can pass into your breast milk and if it can harm your baby. If you are a woman who has or will have a baby, talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.
- if you have liver problems or are infected with the hepatitis B or C virus. See "What are the possible side effects of REYATAZ?"
- if you have diabetes. See "What are the possible side effects of REYATAZ?"
- if you have hemophilia. See "What are the possible side effects of REYATAZ?"
- about all the medicines you take, including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Keep a list of your medicines with you to show your healthcare provider. For more information, see "What important information should I know about taking REYATAZ with other medicines?" and "Who should not take REYATAZ?" Some medicines can cause serious side effects if taken with REYATAZ.

How should I take REYATAZ?

Take REYATAZ once every day exactly as instructed by your healthcare provider. Your healthcare provider will prescribe the amount of REYATAZ that is right for you.

- For adults who have never taken anti-HIV medicines before, the usual dose is 400 mg (two 200-mg capsules) once daily taken with food.
- For adults who have taken anti-HIV medicines in the past, the usual dose is 300 mg (two 150-mg capsules) plus 100 mg of NORVIR® (ritonavir) once daily taken with food.

Your dose will depend on your liver function and on the other anti-HIV medicines that you are taking. REYATAZ is always used with other anti-HIV medicines. If you are taking REYATAZ with SUSTIVA® (efavirenz) or with VIREAD® (tenofovir disoproxil fumarate), you should also be taking NORVIR® (ritonavir).

- Always take REYATAZ with food (a meal or snack) to help it work better. Swallow the capsules whole. Do not open the capsules. Take REYATAZ at the same time each day.
- If you are taking antacids or VIDE® (didanosine) Chewable/Dispersible Buffered Tablets, take REYATAZ 2 hours before or 1 hour after these medicines.
- Do not change your dose or stop taking REYATAZ without first talking with your healthcare provider. It is important to stay under a healthcare provider's care while taking REYATAZ.
- When your supply of REYATAZ starts to run low, get more from your healthcare provider or pharmacy. It is important not to run out of REYATAZ. The amount of HIV in your blood may increase if the medicine is stopped for even a short time.
- If you miss a dose of REYATAZ, take it as soon as possible and then take your next scheduled dose at its regular time. If, however, it is within 6 hours of your next dose, do not take the missed dose. Wait and take the next dose at the regular time. Do not double the next dose. It is important that you do not miss any doses of REYATAZ or your other anti-HIV medicines.
- If you take more than the prescribed dose of REYATAZ, call your healthcare provider or poison control center right away.

Can children take REYATAZ?

REYATAZ has not been fully studied in children under 16 years of age. REYATAZ should not be used in babies under the age of 3 months.

What are the possible side effects of REYATAZ?

The following list of side effects is not complete. Report any new or continuing symptoms to your healthcare provider. If you have questions about side effects, ask your healthcare provider. Your healthcare provider may be able to help you manage these side effects.

The following side effects have been reported with REYATAZ:

- rash (redness and itching) sometimes occurs in patients taking REYATAZ, most often in the first few weeks after the medicine is started. Rashes usually go away within 2 weeks with no change in treatment. Tell your healthcare provider if rash occurs.
- yellowing of the skin or eyes. These effects may be due to increases in bilirubin levels in the blood (bilirubin is made by the liver). Call your healthcare provider if your skin or the white part of your eyes turn yellow. Although these effects may not be damaging to your liver, skin, or eyes, it is important to tell your healthcare provider promptly if they occur.
- a change in the way your heart beats (heart rhythm change). Call your healthcare provider right away if you get dizzy or lightheaded. These could be symptoms of a heart problem.
- diabetes and high blood sugar (hyperglycemia) sometimes happen in patients taking protease inhibitor medicines like REYATAZ. Some patients had diabetes before taking protease inhibitors while others did not. Some patients may need changes in their diabetes medicine.
- if you have liver disease including hepatitis B or C, your liver disease may get worse when you take anti-HIV medicines like REYATAZ.

- some patients with hemophilia have increased bleeding problems with protease inhibitors like REYATAZ.
- changes in body fat. These changes may include an increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck ("buffalo hump"), breast, and around the trunk. Loss of fat from the legs, arms, and face may also happen. The cause and long-term health effects of these conditions are not known at this time.

Other common side effects of REYATAZ taken with other anti-HIV medicines include nausea; headache; stomach pain; vomiting; diarrhea; depression; fever; dizziness; trouble sleeping; numbness, tingling, or burning of hands or feet; and muscle pain.

What important information should I know about taking REYATAZ with other medicines?

Do not take REYATAZ if you take the following medicines (not all brands may be listed; tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take). REYATAZ may cause serious, life-threatening side effects or death when used with these medicines.

- Ergot medicines: dihydroergotamine, ergonovine, ergotamine, and methylergonovine such as CAFERGOT®, MIGRANAL®, D.H.E. 45®, ergotrate maleate, METHERGINE®, and others (used for migraine headaches).
- HALCION® (triazolam, used for insomnia).
- VERSED® (midazolam, used for sedation).
- ORAP® (pimozide, used for Tourette's disorder).
- PROPULSID® (cisapride, used for certain stomach problems).

Do not take the following medicines with REYATAZ because of possible serious side effects:

- CAMPTOSAR® (irinotecan, used for cancer).
- CRIDVAM® (indinavir, used for HIV infection). Both REYATAZ and CRIVAN sometimes cause increased levels of bilirubin in the blood.
- Cholesterol-lowering medicines MEVACOR® (lovastatin) or ZOCOR® (simvastatin).

Do not take the following medicines with REYATAZ because they may lower the amount of REYATAZ in your blood. This may lead to an increased HIV viral load. Resistance to REYATAZ or cross-resistance to other HIV medicines may develop:

- Rifampin (also known as RIMACTANE®, RIFADIN®, RIFATER®, or RIFAMATE®, used for tuberculosis).
- St. John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*), an herbal product sold as a dietary supplement, or products containing St. John's wort.
- "Proton-pump inhibitors" used for indigestion, heartburn, or ulcers such as Aciphex® (rabeprazole), NEXIUM® (esomeprazole), PREVACID® (lansoprazole), PRILOSEC® (omeprazole), or PROTONIX® (pantoprazole).

Do not take the following medicines if you are taking REYATAZ and NORVIR® together:

- VFEND® (voriconazole).

The following medicines may require your healthcare provider to monitor your therapy more closely:

- CIALIS® (tadalafil), LEVITRA® (vardenafil), or VIAGRA® (sildenafil). REYATAZ may increase the chances of serious side effects that can happen with CIALIS, LEVITRA, or VIAGRA. Do not use CIALIS, LEVITRA, or VIAGRA while you are taking REYATAZ unless your healthcare provider tells you it is okay.
- LIPITOR® (atorvastatin). There is an increased chance of serious side effects if you take REYATAZ with this cholesterol-lowering medicine.
- Medicines for abnormal heart rhythm: CORDARONE® (amiodarone), lidocaine, quinidine (also known as CARDIOQUIN®, QUINIDEX®, and others).
- VASCO® (bediril, used for chest pain).
- COUMADIN® (warfarin).
- Tricyclic antidepressants such as ELAVIL® (amitriptyline), NORPRAMIN® (desipramine), SINEQUAN® (doxepin), SYMONTIL® (trimipramine), TOFRANIL® (imipramine), or VIVACTIL® (nortriptyline).
- Medicines to prevent organ transplant rejection: SANDIMMUNE® or NEORAL® (cyclosporine), RAPAMUNE® (sirolimus), or PROGRAF® (tacrolimus).

The following medicines may require a change in the dose or dose schedule of either REYATAZ or the other medicine:

- FORTOVA® (saquinavir).
- NORVIR® (ritonavir).
- SUSTIVA® (efavirenz).
- VIDEX® (didanosine) or antacids.
- VIREAD® (tenofovir disoproxil fumarate).
- MYCOBUTIN® (rifabutin).
- Calcium channel blockers such as CARDIZEM® or TIAZAC® (diltiazem), COVERA-HS® or ISOPTIN SR® (verapamil) and others.
- BIAxin® (clarithromycin).
- Medicines for indigestion, heartburn, or ulcers such as AXID® (nizatidine), PEPICID AC® (famotidine), TAGAMET® (cimetidine), or ZANTAC® (ranitidine).

Women who use birth control pills or "the patch" should choose a different kind of contraception. REYATAZ may affect the safety and effectiveness of birth control pills or the patch. Talk to your healthcare provider about choosing an effective contraceptive.

Remember:

1. Know all the medicines you take.
2. Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take.
3. Do not start a new medicine without talking to your healthcare provider.

How should I store REYATAZ?

- Store REYATAZ (atazanavir sulfate) Capsules at room temperature, 59° to 86° F (15° to 30° C). Do not store this medicine in a damp place such as a bathroom medicine cabinet or near the kitchen sink.
- Keep your medicine in a tightly closed container.
- Throw away REYATAZ when it is outdated or no longer needed by flushing it down the toilet or pouring it down the sink.

General information about REYATAZ

This medicine was prescribed for your particular condition. Do not use REYATAZ for another condition. Do not give REYATAZ to other people, even if they have the same symptoms you have. It may harm them. Keep REYATAZ and all medicines out of the reach of children and pets.

This summary does not include everything there is to know about REYATAZ. Medicines are sometimes prescribed for conditions that are not mentioned in patient information leaflets. Remember, no written summary can replace careful discussion with your healthcare provider. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider or you can call 1-800-426-7644.

What are the ingredients in REYATAZ?

Active Ingredient: atazanavir sulfate

Inactive Ingredients: Crospovidone, lactose monohydrate (milk sugar), magnesium stearate, gelatin, FD&C Blue #2, and titanium dioxide.

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Revised July 2004

YEAR IN REVIEW

Military matters in 2004

by Bob Roehr

The effort to roll back the antigay military policy known as "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" can be compared to the trench warfare of World War I, where the battle lines remain static for long periods of time, with only modest incremental changes. This past year saw small but encouraging signs that the effort is moving in the right direction.

Gays and lesbians continued to be discharged under DADT but there was a sense that the policy was being more fairly administered. However, there is a lingering fear that it may be only temporary, due in part to the manpower needs of the war in Iraq.

Antigay harassment within the ranks is abating. This was reflected in survey numbers showing that younger soldiers, just like their civilian counterparts, are more accepting of gays. Their older colleagues lag behind.

LGBT advocates eagerly watched to see how the military system of justice would apply the *Lawrence* decision by the U.S. Supreme Court within the military context. That June 2003 decision threw out state sodomy laws.

A partial answer came at the end of August when the United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces largely ducked the constitutional question in the *Marcum* case. Instead it focused on the facts that the consensual sodomy had occurred within a chain of command, and thus was more akin to statutory rape.

A better answer came in early December from the U.S. Army Court of Criminal Appeals when it applied *Lawrence* to a case of voluntary oral sex involving a male soldier and a female civilian.

"What's most remarkable about the case is that the Court of Appeals concluded that sex in the barracks itself has an insufficient military connection to overcome the essentially private and personal character of that activity," said James Garland, a professor at Hofstra Law School.

The Pentagon still may appeal the decision.

The criminality of engaging in sodomy was one of the props used to justify DADT. The *Lawrence* decision knocked that out. Gay rights advocates used *Lawrence* as an opportunity to launch new constitutional attacks against the policy.

In a surprise move in October, Log Cabin Republicans filed a challenge in Los Angeles on behalf of its unnamed members who currently are serving in the armed forces.

The Servicemembers Legal Defense Network filed its lawsuit in Boston, in December. Its plaintiffs were a dozen men and women from different branches of the service who had been kicked out under DADT. They all sought reinstatement into the armed forces.

Both cases are being handled on a pro bono basis by highly prestigious law firms. One or both of them are likely to end up before the U.S. Supreme Court in two to five years.

In October, SLDN Executive Director C. Dixon Osburn announced that SLDN would seek to have a bill introduced in Congress to repeal DADT. He acknowledged that it likely would be several years before a vote is cast on repeal.

"We hope to end, once and for all, the ban on gays in the military. ... It is unconstitutional and contrary to our national security interests," he said. ▼



SLDN's C. Dixon Osburn and Shara Greer at a Dec. news conference.

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Monthly SF gay newspaper shuts down

by Matthew S. Bajko

After seven years of publication, San Francisco's last remaining monthly gay newspaper has ceased publication. *Spectrum* quietly ended its run after its November edition.

The paper, begun in June 1997 by Gary Nathan and his partner, David Gin, a San Francisco police officer, had a decidedly grassroots bent, profiling numerous community groups and LGBT individuals over the years. *Spectrum* also played media sponsor to countless gay events and offered free advertising to local nonprofits which otherwise could not afford to publicize their functions.

Nathan contacted advertisers and contributors in recent weeks to alert them of his decision to pull the plug, for now, on his paper. The November issue carried no public notice or editor's note that it would be the final edition.

"I didn't do it because I just didn't feel I was saying goodbye. You will still see us at events, of course. There are still a lot of organizations we feel very interested in and passionate about, regardless of what we do with the paper," said Nathan. "We suspended publication for right now. We hired a company to look at doing a complete reformat of it, but we haven't decided for sure what we are doing."

His decision to shut down the

paper at this time also stems in part to severe back pain Gin suffers due to an on-the-job injury.

"Because of all the pain he is in, we are not enjoying *Spectrum* like we have in the past," said Nathan. "We are fighting the city which is not paying to have any physical therapy for David."

Nathan said he was meeting with the consultants, who he declined to name, this week to begin discussing a new look for the paper. In February, Nathan said he would make a final decision on whether to revive *Spectrum*. In the meantime, he said he intends to keep the paper's Web site up and running.

"We are looking at possibly three things: how we can cover the

community better since we have the *B.A.R.*, which we feel is the gay newspaper of San Francisco; how to service the community better and our advertisers better; and how we can take a look that is slightly different."

As with the *Bay Area Reporter* and the *Bay Times*, which switched to being a weekly in mid-2003, *Spectrum* looked like a typical newspaper, but came out the first week of the month. It survived long past one other monthly publication, *QSF*, and beyond the biweekly *San Francisco Frontiers*, both of which had a magazine format. Nathan said it is possible *Spectrum* could become more of a monthly magazine if it resumes publication.

"I am hoping to have a decision that is affirmative beginning the first week of February," said Nathan, who added if he goes with a redesigned *Spectrum*, the first edition would not come out until at least April. "If I don't feel that it is going to be a benefit to our community and a complement to the *B.A.R.* or something that I would be proud of, we are not going to do it."

Contributors over the years expressed sadness at seeing the paper go.

"I think it is not a positive thing at all when any voice is silenced. In the case of *Spectrum* that voice was particularly grassroots," said the paper's cartoonist Leslie Ewing. "Frankly, I am not

surprised. I know they have been struggling for the last year, year and a half and it's been a labor of love and a lot of hard work."

Ken Ludden, a reporter for the paper who also penned the "Dear Diva" column, said the paper's coverage augmented the city's other two gay papers.

"It was such a good marriage between the *Bay Times*, *B.A.R.* and *Spectrum*. Those three really created a triangle of balance that was very good and healthy," said Ludden, who hopes to launch www.deardiva.com by fall 2005.

"What *Spectrum* did was it gave an in-depth and comprehensive coverage specifically to local LGBT institutions, individuals and organizations." ▼

Gay marriage

◀ page 1

what will no doubt be a defining case of his political and legal career.

"It is going to be an interesting week," said Herrera, his chair tilted back, feet dangling above the floor.

Mentioned as a possible candidate for state attorney general, Herrera is unconcerned about his unwavering pursuit of striking down the state's discriminatory marriage laws.

"I am not concerned about what the latest poll says or some pundit

might think. I am in this for the long term," he said. "I am remaining true to what I said I was going to do when I came into office."

Since taking on the gay marriage issue, Herrera said he has seen a spike in applications from lawyers around the country. And while the case has taken up an inordinate amount of time, he said it has also emboldened the office in pursuit of other cases, such as the successful litigation against a federal partial birth abortion ban and uncovering a nationwide scheme to defraud public schools of federal technology funds.

"I don't think our efforts have suffered at all. It has actually spurred us," he said. "This case has got more people energized to do groundbreaking work."

Herrera filed his lawsuit against the state on March 11, after the California Supreme Court issued an order directing the city to stop issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples. Mayor Gavin Newsom surprised and shocked the nation on February 12, two days before Valentine's Day, when he instructed city officials to begin marrying gay and lesbian couples.

Over the course of the next month, more than 4,000 same-sex couples walked through the doors of City Hall to exchange wedding vows during "The Winter of Love." The mayor's defiance of state law set off a media frenzy, with images of the happy gay couples beamed around the world.

The San Francisco marriages also sparked intense criticism, not only from conservatives and anti-gay groups who decried the mayor's actions as leading to the death of the institution of marriage, but also among Democratic leaders such as Massachusetts Congressman Barney Frank, who called Newsom's order misguided and detrimental to the fight for gay marriage.

Massachusetts' Supreme Judicial Court had already ordered Bay State officials to begin marrying same-sex couples last spring, and many pointed to the legal victory as the best route to gaining equal marriage rights. The "civil disobedience" in San Francisco, some argued, would play into the hands of Republican operatives who would then use it to their advantage come the November elections.

Those fears played out when 11 states passed constitutional amendments banning gay marriage, and in some cases, all legal partnership status for same-sex couples. With Republicans also securing their stronghold on the government after President Bush won re-election and the GOP gained seats in both houses of Congress, leading Democrats

pounced on the gay marriage issue as the reason for their defeat. California Senator Dianne Feinstein famously said the gay marriages were "too much, too fast, too soon" and criticized Newsom for his actions.

Media pundits and political experts pointed to exit polling that showed nearly a quarter of voters said they based their decision on "moral values," code interpreted to mean they opposed gay marriage and abortion. However, Herrera said his decision to bring forth the city's case is based on the "moral values" that San Francisco holds dear.

"I believe that politics is very complex. People cast ballots for a lot of different reasons. Some do for moral values, but what is moral values - gays, God, and guns?" said Herrera. "I don't think it is that easy to simplify, especially when the next week there is a national poll talking about perspective Supreme Court nominees that shows more than 50 percent of Americans want *Roe v. Wade* untouched."

After 10 months of being a public advocate for equal marriage rights, Herrera's advice to national gay groups like the Human Rights Campaign is not to retreat but to talk about the issue.

"The fact of the matter is the issue is out there and putting our head in the sand and not fighting for it I don't think is the answer," said Herrera.

With gay marriage an issue that is not going to go away anytime soon, advocates need to speak up, argues Herrera.

"I don't think just sitting by and not articulating a message that is inclusive and fights for civil rights for people is the answer. I think maybe as a party, as Democrats, we have to cast the issues we care about more in moral terms," he said. "People who are liberal or left of center doesn't mean they have less faith or are not spiritual in some way. The issues we care about have a moral component."

Case preview

Led by Chief Deputy City Attorney Therese Stewart, the city will argue this week that not only do gays and lesbians have a right to marry, but in denying that right, the state is financially harming the city. Herrera points to a study by the Congressional Budget Office which found the federal government could expect to raise \$1 billion in each of the next 10 years if gays could marry and a Williams Project study out of the University of California, Los Angeles that found the state budget would gain up to \$25.2 million each year due to allowing same-sex couples to marry.

For the city, Herrera argues San Francisco would save on public health costs, see an increase in tax revenue, and gain a windfall in tourist-based dollars if gay couples could say "I do." But the overarching reason to allow gay marriage is to protect gays' and lesbians' right to equal protection under the law, he said.

"To me the most important thing is not the dollars, it's standing up for people's civil rights and doing it in a way that's in keeping with San Francisco's civic virtues," said Herrera.

In reading the arguments put forward by the antigay groups, who have been allowed to file briefs in the case, Herrera said their positions only go to strengthen the city's stance.

"For me it makes our case even more compelling when you see people talking about, well, AB205 gives gay and lesbian people almost all of the privileges and benefits accorded to heterosexual individuals. That is, hey, you know what, gay and lesbian people should be happy with the fact we are relegating them to second-class citizenship. Well, equal means equal. It's second-class citizenship and that shouldn't be countenanced by anybody," said Herrera. "As for arguments that somehow same-sex marriage opens a Pandora's box to polygamy, bigamy, and other things that are incredibly insulting to the dignity of those who want to move forward to solemnize their relationships."

By making such inane statements such as gay marriage is detrimental to children, his opponents only weaken their position, said Herrera.

"I think it is a ridiculous argument they have put forth. There is no basis for that. There are a lot of married people that don't have children or can't have children. Are they entitled to some lesser protection?" Herrera said. "The fact of the matter is the right to marry is a fundamental right, it is not only a fundamental right to those who want to have kids. So their argument is specious. It throws up a smoke screen designed to perpetuate discrimination and encourage bigotry."

"When I hear those arguments it makes me angry," he added. "They want to make those arguments fine. But when they make them they undermine their own credibility on the central points of this case."

Oral arguments could take most of the day Wednesday. Kramer's decision is not expected until March 2005. No matter what the ruling, appeals are expected and the case likely will be in the courts for the next couple of years. ▼

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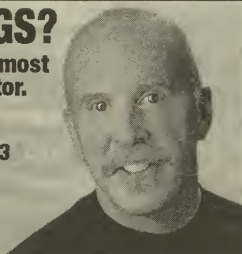
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OBITUARIES

Famed SF DJ dies

by Matthew S. Bajko

Michael Garrett, a longtime San Francisco DJ and owner of the now closed CD Record Rack, died in his sleep on December 10. He was 52.

The cause of death has yet to be determined, friends said. Mr. Garrett, who was HIV-positive, had been suffering from peripheral neuropathy, a nervous system disorder that causes tingling and numbness in the hands and feet. According to the AIDS Treatment Data Network, symptoms include burning, shooting pain, throbbing, and aching.

"He had a lot of pain in his feet," said longtime friend Steve Fabus, who discovered Mr. Garrett's body.

Mr. Garrett, who grew up outside Austin, Texas, came to San Francisco around 1976. Garrett achieved fame playing at the I-Beam, Trocadero, Galleria, and Giftcenter parties. During the height of the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s, Mr. Garrett's Sunday tea dances were the only dance parties in town.

"Michael kept the tea dance going even during those really dark periods when people needed a place to connect and belong," said Fabus. "At that point the tea dance was the only thing going in San Francisco; it was the only venue people had to gather."

Fabus, himself a celebrated San Francisco DJ, said Garrett's long



Michael Garrett

running Sunday tea dance at the I-Beam gave people a sense of connection and belonging throughout the darkest days of the AIDS epidemic, and his record store became a social center for the community.

"Michael was a showman that reminded DJs that 'making a musical statement is great as long as you're giving people a party,'" said Fabus. "Michael loved San Francisco and in many ways personified the city with his charm, wit, and playful irreverence. He made you feel at home and part of a family on and off his dance floor."

In 1994, after remodeling the music store on 18th Street for owner Jake Symusiak, Mr. Garrett inherited the business a few months later after Symusiak was

murdered. As owner of the Castro record shop, Mr. Garrett not only sold vinyl releases to San Francisco's DJ talent, he also watched over the musical collections of countless gay men who died from AIDS.

Since the store's opening in 1984, Symusiak and then Mr. Garrett filled two garages with record albums dropped off by partners, friends, and family of the deceased. When he shuttered the store in April 2002, Mr. Garrett also sold off the collection of thousands of albums.

"Because of AIDS the store became a depository for all these kids' record collections," Mr. Garrett said at the time. "Their families would pack up their records and just drop them off with us."

Mr. Garrett is survived by three brothers, Tim in San Francisco, and Richard and Phillip in Texas; partner Robert Kimler; and friends Fabus, Randy Schiller, Sam Schneider, Jerry Bonham, Jimmy Horde; as well as many other friends, associates, and admirers.

"Michael would be the first to remind you that life should be pleasurable. That we are here to break down barriers and explore; to live life to the fullest; not to take ourselves too seriously; and definitely have some fun," said Fabus.

A gathering of friends will celebrate Mr. Garrett's time in their lives on Saturday, January 15 at 2 p.m. at Moby Dick, 4089 18th Street in the Castro. For more information, contact Fabus at sfabus@sbcglobal.net. ▼

Single daily pill for HIV in development

by Bob Roehr

A single pill once a day to treat HIV is the goal set by two drug companies that have agreed to collaborate. It may be on the market within two years.

Bristol-Myers Squibb produces Sustiva, recommended in most treatment guidelines as part of a preferred initial therapy. It is in the class of drugs known as non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NNRTIs).

Gilead Sciences produces Viread and Emtriva, two popular and potent second-generation drugs in the reverse transcriptase inhibitor (NRTI) class. They also may be used as part of an initial regimen.

The combination of these three drugs has been used in thou-

sands of patients with good results. However, a new round of trials will be required to demonstrate that packing them all into the same pill results in the same therapeutic effect with no additional side effects.

It is the first time that two companies have agreed to collaborate to produce a single anti-HIV pill that contains multiple drugs. Success is not assured.

Several years ago Merck created Trizavir, a combination of AZT, 3TC, and abacavir, three drugs in the NRTI class. It hoped that the single pill might become a standard treatment.

But a clinical trial was stopped early in 2003 when it became apparent that Trizavir was not as effective in controlling HIV as combining drugs from two different classes. Trizavir is recommended

for use only in combination with another class of antiretroviral drug.

Kaletra is another possible single drug therapy. It combines the protease inhibitor lopinavir with a sub-therapeutic dose of the protease inhibitor ritonavir to keep it in the bloodstream longer.

A pilot trial at a Houston clinic has demonstrated promising results and the manufacturer, Abbott Laboratories, is backing full-scale clinical trials of this use. Kaletra currently is approved for use only in combination with other drugs.

Some industry analysts see the Bristol-Myers/Gilead alliance in developing their combination single pill as a defensive move to protect their market share against the ease of use of Kaletra, should it be approved for single drug use. ▼

who has been in San Francisco since June 2003. "We don't know the extent of the disease yet. The three positive samples came out of the first eight we tested. We are expanding testing and testing over 100 of them. We will have a better sense when the results come in of how far widespread LGV is."

While chlamydia is commonly found in both men and women, the types of chlamydia that cause LGV cause a more serious infection that travels through the body's lymphatic system. The most common symptom is proctitis, including itching of the anus, blood or mucus in the stool, or straining and cramping when having a bowel movement.

If LGV is left untreated, the inflammation that results can cause scarring of the genitals or rectum and colon. The scars may interfere with normal functions of the urinary or gastrointestinal system and lead to severe illnesses or

rarely, death.

Magnet, the gay men's health center in the Castro, notified those clients it treated for rectal chlamydia in the last three months that if they are still experiencing any of the extreme symptoms of proctitis to return to be tested for LGV.

"We will talk to them on an individual basis if testing for LGV would be appropriate," said Magnet's Executive Director Steve Gibson. "At this point it is not recommended that all gay men get tested for LGV. If someone gets a positive result for rectal chlamydia but does not have these symptoms then we are not recommending people come in to get retested."

Health officials are particularly concerned about gay men contracting LGV, for the STD can facilitate transmission and acquisition of HIV and other STDs or blood-borne diseases. Once detected, LGV is effectively treated

page 18 ►

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Rare STD

◀ page 1

2003, were reported by local health authorities in Rotterdam in December 2003. The number alarmed Dutch officials, who normally only report five cases of LGV per year.

Since then, health officials have reported cases of LGV in Belgium, France, and Sweden. In July, the CDC identified a case of LGV in a gay man from Atlanta. In San Francisco, prior to 2004, only three cases of LGV had been reported since 1998, none since 2001.

"This is a resurgence of an old infection but something we haven't seen in San Francisco in four years, really," said Dr. Sam Mitchell, a medical epidemiologist at the health department's STD branch and a CDC Epidemic Intelligence Service field assignee

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Blades on ice

by Jim Provenzano

Ask any lesbian or gay figure skater about the growth in their sport, and you're likely to hear more about the ever-changing rules and regulations than about issues of sexuality.

That's because LGBT skaters have made so much progress in the sport and are now part of larg-

er clubs and unions while developing their own LGBT-inclusive events.

Part of this movement is due to the International Gay Figure Skating Union, co-chaired by Laura Moore and Bradley Erickson, both of New York. IGFSU was recently elected to a second four-year term as organizational director of the Federation of Gay Games.

In order to hold competitive skating events, sanctions from governing bodies need to be acquired. IGFSU works with associations such as the Ice Skating Institute, but the more prestigious International Skating Union has resisted allowing sanctions for skating events that include

same-sex pairs as competitors. At events featuring American skaters held over the past few years, sanctions were more easily obtained from the United States Figure Skating Association.

Here in the Bay Area, dozens of LGBT figure skaters compete and perform in regional events, and many have taken home medals from Gay Games competitions.

SkateOut has held annual events in San Francisco since 2000. Organized by Thom Mullins, who is also a skater, Skate

Out's recently produced "One Voice, a Cabaret on Ice" featured live singers and skating. The group is also planning a 2005 Challenge Cup (June 25-28), large ensemble routines for dozens of skaters, and weekly practices for future competitions.

The upcoming Fabulous Cup in Cologne, Germany (June 2005), Chicago's Gay Games VII (July 15-26, 2006), and Montreal's OutGames (July 27-August 2, 2006) will draw LGBT figure skaters from around the world. Gay figure skater Rudy Galindo was named an ambassador to Gay Games VII, while gay Canadian skater Brian Orser has endorsed OutGames.

Some skaters maintain a more independent status in mainstream skating, like Dennis Palaganas, a Maryland-based competitive skater and software developer with degrees in mathematics. Although one of few out skaters in his area, Palaganas doesn't consider that a problem.

"I don't feel that there is any pressure to remain in the closet or worry about repercussions for being out," said Palaganas. "The atmosphere is relaxed, so while it's okay to be out, the focus of conversation is on skating, which is great. I've never felt pressure to hide who I am."

When asked if his extensive math background relates to his skating, Palaganas said one of the things that attracted him to the sport was the arcane scoring system. "It was always interesting to look at the ordinal results and to figure out how close a competition was or what the consequences would have been if one judge had changed her/his mind," said Palaganas. "The new code of points has replaced the old scoring system, and as such the charm of the old system is gone."

For most out LGBT skaters, the increased number of competitors in the adult figure skating category has opened up more opportunities for participation. The sport uses different tests and competition levels for adults, younger competitors, and elite skaters. The adult category offers opportunities for older beginners.

"The ISU is just beginning to recognize the economic value of adult skaters," said Moore. The first ISU Adult World Competition will take place this summer.



Dennis Palaganas at the 2003 New Year Invitational in Ashburn, Virginia.

Same-sex pairs figure skating, however, is still a concern for LGBT skaters, as it's not allowed under ISU rules. Moore spearheaded the efforts to have figure skating included at the Gay Games as far back as 1994 at New York's Games (where she also competed). Waivers were obtained to allow male and female pairs to compete.

At Gay Games V in 1998, Dutch organizers failed to get such a waiver from the ISU. That led to a last-minute court case. Amsterdam's Games held a controversial "public practice" where only participant—but not competitive—medals were awarded.

Sydney's Gay Games almost suffered a similar problem, until the IGFSU stepped in to help get a different international group, the ISI, to sanction the event.

For Chicago's 2006 Gay Games VII, no such problems are anticipated, because the IGFSU has played a role in changing the rules.

"There were two specific issues that we have improved over the Gay Games VI format," said Erickson. "Same-sex partners are now a given with ISI. It is written directly into their rules."

Montreal's OutGames, scheduled two weeks after Gay Games VII, has a sanction from Skate Canada. But it will also need to get approval from an international skating group for non-Canadian skaters to qualify in all categories and for their scores to be added to their records. Breaking such rules can result in disqualification for competitors.

"Time will tell if the ISU will allow skaters from countries other than Canada to participate," said Moore. "As long as the competition does not follow ISU rules, it is highly unlikely that they will."

Erickson remains hopeful. "It's just a question of how to achieve everything on their agenda."

Palaganas, who is still deciding which event to take part in, supports the idea of LGBT events, but has found a level of comfort and success in Adult Nationals competitions.

"While gay skaters are definitely out, and their presence is felt both on and off the ice, being gay is not the focus," he said. "Gay skaters are simply themselves, as the straight skaters are. We come together to share our passion for skating." ▼

Out at the theater

If you haven't yet seen the San Francisco production of Richard Greenberg's Tony Award-winning gay baseball play, *Take Me Out*, consider attending the special benefit performance at the Golden Gate Theatre, Thursday, January 6.

Ticket price is \$78 (includes \$3 service fee). A portion of each ticket will benefit Academy of Friends. Tickets will be available at will call. E-mail Elisabeth Loeffler at elloeffler@academyoffriends.org for more information. AOF's 25th annual Academy Awards gala is slated for February 27. ▼

Rare STD

◀ page 17

with the antibiotic doxycycline, which patients must take twice a day for three weeks.

"It takes about a week to get results back and so men need to come in early if they are having

symptoms of anal itching, blood in their stool or painful bowel movement so we can treat them and treat their partners early, otherwise it could spread fairly rapidly through the community," said Mitchell. "Any individual who has receptive anal intercourse and has symptoms of proctitis or history of travel to the Netherlands in the

last year should be screened by a clinician in order to be tested and assessed for LGV."

Anyone showing symptoms for LGV is encouraged to receive medical treatment at City Clinic, 356 7th Street or at Magnet, 4122 18th Street. Visit www.sfcityclinic.org/providers for further information. ▼

Urban Forage

◀ page 4

lawsuit against the restaurant apparently reached a settlement in the first week of December, according to documents in San Francisco Superior Court. The suit, filed last February, claims that a man inside Urban Forage's original Fillmore location fell through an open trap door in the restaurant's customer area, sustaining permanent injuries.

Local Web sites and blogs have

speculated that the business may have been done in by the recent settlement; others believe that the restaurant expanded too quickly.

At www.SFist.com, editors reported that in the end, Urban Forage's remaining employees suffered.

"In an extremely un-Diet-For-A-Small-Planet move, Urban Forage staff were also told that they would not be receiving their final paychecks," the December 13 update said. "If that's true, that is so not cool! Guess management's always carnivorous in the end, huh?"

Einhorn was unreachable at

press time. ▼

Correction

The article "Progressive restaurant a sham, organizers say" in the December 9 Bay Area Reporter incorrectly identified Adrian English as a co-owner of the local Urban Forage restaurants. English has since clarified that while he began working with the restaurant with an eye to become co-owner, those plans never came through and he has instead been in a managerial role at the restaurant. We regret the error.

Links

www.fabulous-cup.de
www.gaygameschicago.org
www.IGFSU.org
www.isu.org
www.Montreal2006.org
www.skateisi.org
www.skateout.org
www.usfsa.org

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UCC files FCC petition

by Kevin Davis

The United Church of Christ filed a petition with the Federal Communications Commission December 9 to deny license renewals to two Miami network affiliates for refusing a gay-welcoming ad for which it sought to purchase air time. UCC claimed the rejection denied local viewers access to a range of religious expression.

Lawyers from the Media Access Project and Georgetown University's Institute for Public Representation filed the petition on behalf of UCC to deny license renewal to the CBS and NBC affiliates, questioning whether the stations' parent companies, Viacom and General Electric, respectively, are serving the public interest.

The two networks have said the ads – featuring a gay and lesbian couple holding hands and embracing – violate their standards and practices policies on controversy and issue advocacy.

Florida UCC members have also signed complaints arguing that viewers within the stations' broadcast area are denied a message of inclusion.

The attorneys base their argument on a 1973 Supreme Court ruling that an anti-Vietnam War group had no First Amendment right to air an ad because the former FCC Fairness Doctrine ensured that controversy gets covered. Today, in such a doctrine's absence, some groups are unable to air their viewpoint even if they are willing to pay for it.

Locally, affiliates have the discretion to run the ads if approached by a client.

"Even though we're owned by Viacom we can set our own policy," said Akilah Monifa, communications director for CBS5 and UPN in San Francisco. "Basically, one of the agreements is that we can do our own thing around commercials. If they approach us and say 'we want to buy local time,' we can run it."

Regional UCC congregations are holding benefits and pooling funds to buy less expensive daytime spots in local markets, so far in Maine, Illinois, and Minnesota, said Barb Powell, UCC's information officer.

"What's happening is – and we're encouraging it among regional offices – in several parts of the country the banding together

and chipping in. Local independent affiliates are fine with running the ad and were providing broadcast-quality tapes," said Powell.

Although several cable channels have agreed to air the ad, not every viewer pays for a cable package, said Angela Campbell, director of the Georgetown institute.

In arguing the need for provocative advertising, defenders raise elements of the fairness doctrine, which explicitly obligated broadcasters to provide viewers and listeners with programming relevant to the community and multiple points of view in a fair and neutral manner. But, some networks believed the doctrine actually suppressed diverse views while others simply refused to comply with it.

The FCC repealed the doctrine in the 1980s under the Reagan administration, predicting that a free market of competing missions and values would serve to provide a spectrum of ideas. It was hoped to result in the airing of more, not less, controversial programming.

"They said there's many more sources of information now, therefore it's more likely that any point of view will find a place," said Campbell.

However, that vision has not come to fruition.

When the broadcast networks created their broad standards and practices policies, they owned only a handful of stations in the big markets while most local stations were independently owned. Fifty years ago broadcasters were allowed to own one station per viewer market, and only 25 percent of the market.

Today, with consolidation and cross medium management, licensees typically owned by large conglomerates have devolved by airing budget-minded and lucrative repackaging of entertainment shows creating least common denominator programming in local viewing markets, according to Harold Feld, associate director of MAP.

Rules require national owners to delegate enough autonomy to affiliate managers to broadcast community events, and tailor programming to local community standards.

However, managers at network-owned and operated stations might not risk disappointing an intimidating corporation providing access to world news and other indispensable resources.

"A Viacom-owned red state affiliate might not make a decision without corporate backing," said Feld.

One of the fairness doctrine's central points was encouraging licensees to expose viewers to uncomfortable ideas.

This idea became formalized in a landmark 1966 case also brought by UCC, challenging a Jacksonville, Mississippi TV station that blacked out any news of the civil rights struggle, instead choosing to air reruns such as *Amos and Andy*.

A Washington D.C. circuit court ruled that the station violated a licensee's duty to expose people to opposing views as stewards of the public trust, even if displeasing to the majority of conservatively entrenched viewers.

In refusing to sell time "for the advocacy of viewpoints on controversial issues of public importance," the current edition of the CBS' statement of policy on political broadcasting defines such an ad as "one that has a significant impact on society or its institutions, and is the subject of vigorous debate with substantial elements of the community in opposition to one another." ▼

CDC study

◀ page 11

children."

With marriage rights, "People can rest assured that their children will be protected," said Molly McKay, associate executive director of Equality California. "The long-term partner is not at jeopardy of losing them."

Basic rights

LGBT leaders mentioned just a few of the basic legal rights enjoyed by straight couples that lead to mental anxiety and fear for same-sex couples.

"Gay couples can't take for granted simple things like hospital visitation, Social Security benefits, and nursing home visitation rights that do provide mental and emotional security that gay people are categorically barred from in some ways," said McKay. "Without access to all these legal rights that heterosexuals have creates an added level of distress."

"There are so many additional stressors when there's no security of a legal framework with which to present yourselves as a couple," said PFLAG's Schlittler. "The title of marriage tells the hospital medical technician and the border crossing agent a great amount about how that couple should be

treated when they interact with institutions."

"Having legal rights when applying for survivor benefits, those are protections we don't have or they take an enormous amount of legal effort," said Haller. "So it makes sense that we would really benefit, from a health standpoint, if organizations that promote public health look at this evidence [of the CDC study]."

"We need marriage and civil unions to be eligible for health benefits, hospital visitation rights, to make decisions for a partner when incapacitated," said Ginsberg.

McKay called marriage "short-hand" for "long-time commitment to the most intimate person in my life."

"It's a word that heterosexuals understand," she said. "They might not know what a domestic partner is, but everyone knows what a spouse is and all the connotations that come with it. [Opponents] try to set it up as a wedge issue but really it's a bridge to the fabric of society."

Wolfson said that in addition to economic safety there is marriage's "intangible sense of security, stability, and aspirations to permanence that helps create well-being. We're denied this massive social institution that other people have on their life's journey."

"A strong personal component

to marriage is the feeling that I have made a commitment to this person," said Haller. "We're social creatures. The more we have a strong relationship with a human being, one that's recognized by society, the less we have to worry about. Where's nurturing going to come from?"

Wolfson said that the couple's community support helps "reinforce" and "reassure" the bond.

"There's more expectation to work things through, to think of themselves as a unit," he said. "Society treats you as a unit, together, working as a team, and there for one another."

"Getting married is a public declaration of the intent of commitment to one another, affirming that essentially, this is how we are to be seen," said Schlittler.

Not for everyone

Not everyone in the LGBT community, however, is jumping on the marriage bandwagon. One gay man believes that the struggle

to legalize same-sex marriage is a "dead end."

"I think that people who are married drink more and smoke more, stuck in constricting dead-end relationships saying, 'what on earth was I thinking,'" surmised Gay Shame's Mathilda, a.k.a. Matt Bernstein Sycamore, editor of *That's Revolting: Queer Strategies for Resisting Assimilation*. "Anyone that thinks that marriage makes a couple happier is delusional and missing out on the entire history of marriage as an institution through which child abuse occurs, and has nothing at all to do with happiness. To these marriage proponents, I'd say go to spousal and domestic violence clinics, there you see [the result of] the silencing mechanism."

Bernstein argues that the LGBT community should not trade in its history of inventing "transformative" ways of coupling and that access to the privileges of marriage should be available universally, married or not.

"We should fight for marriage abolition. Housing, health care, citizenship – none of those things should be based on some little document you get from the government. We should dismantle this institution and create something better, not the same patriarchal system, not mimic the worst institutions – military service, marriage – that have become central to the mainstream gay [community]. Instead of fighting for universal access, they're fighting for a piece of the pie."

"I find it ironic that this dominant sign of straight conformity, we've suddenly made into a sign of progress," he said. "Gay people are stuck in a model of normalcy, wanting the white picket fence, bridal shower, and poodle."

But Haller defends the institution.

"For everything that people say about marriage being an imperfect institution, it still ought to be promoted for everyone," said Haller. ▼

Lyon-Martin

◀ page 5

Which is not to say that it has all been smooth sailing. The clinic's previous medical director and nurse practitioner resigned amidst the changes, which is why the clinic currently cannot see patients for primary care. Former clinic staff could not be located by the B.A.R. by press time. However, a new nurse practitioner has been hired and a new full-time physician is about to be hired. The clinic has also brought on two staff members dedicated to development.

"I think there was some initial concern about their medical practice being closed, but when it comes to finding a new provider

in a setting like that it's important to find the right one," said John Gressman, president and CEO of San Francisco's Community Clinic Consortium, of which Lyon-Martin is a member. The consortium provides Lyon-Martin with funds for HIV and homeless related care. "As one of their funders, we feel like they have it under control."

Williams-Flournoy said that this short period of reorganization is a step in the path to offering better service.

"We understand who we serve and the niche in the community we occupy, and we think those folks should get the best care possible," said Williams-Flournoy. "We want to be a part of the safety net." ▼

MCC's holiday gifts for the kids



The Reverend Dr. G. Penny Nixon, left, senior pastor at Metropolitan Community Church-San Francisco, points to the gifts donated by the church as April Silas, right, of the Homeless Children's Network, looks on. Church staff Paul Fairley, Julie Potter, Eric Cole, and the Reverend Terri Echelbarger coordinated the collecting of gifts for more than 300 children and they were taken to the shelter Monday afternoon.

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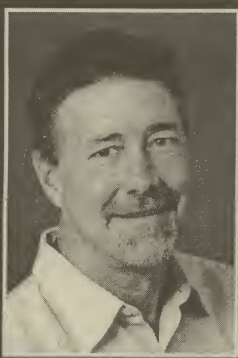
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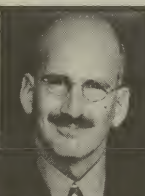
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LEGAL NOTICES



CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

INVITATION FOR BIDS FOR EXTERIOR DECK REPLACEMENT AND PAINTING
AT POTRERO ANNEX AND WESTBROOK
Solicitation No. 04-620-IFB-037

The San Francisco Housing Authority will receive sealed bids for Exterior Deck Repair and Painting at Potrero Annex, CAL 10 and Westbrook Apartments, CAL 1-9. Construction cost ranges from \$350,000 to \$400,000.

On Tuesday January 11, 2005, at 10:00 AM, a site inspection will be held at the Housing Development. Prospective bidders will meet in front of 120-135 Northridge Road, Westbrook, San Francisco.

Responses are due 2:00 P.M. on Thursday, January 20, 2005. The IFB document is available at the Authority's office at 1815 Egbert Avenue, San Francisco. A processing fee of \$50.00 (non-refundable) will be required for each set of documents. All payments must be in the form of Certified Check, Cashier's Check, or Company Check payable to the San Francisco Housing Authority. Cash or personal checks are not acceptable. Contact Ms. Carolina Penate-Larrea, at (415) 715-3171, e-mail penatec@sflha.org.

VACANCY NOTICE

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 54974, California Government Code, notice is hereby given of the following unscheduled vacancies. Interested persons may obtain an application from the Board of Supervisors web site at www.sfgov.org/site/uploadedfiles/bdsuprvr/Vacancy_Notices/vacancy_app.pdf or from the Clerk of the Rules Committee, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244, San Francisco, CA 94102-4689. Completed application should be submitted to the Clerk of the Board. All applicants must be residents of San Francisco, unless otherwise stated. Additional information may be obtained by accessing the City's web site: www.sfgov.org/bdsuprvr
Please Note: Depending upon the posting date, some vacancies may have already been filled. To determine if vacancies for this Board/Committee/Commission or Task Force are still available please call the Rules Committee Clerk at 554-5184.

SKATEBOARDING TASK FORCE

Vacant seat, succeeding Ilya Weber, resigned, seat 2, a voting representative from the in-line skating community knowledgeable about the sport for a period of five years, for the unexpired portion of a three-year term ending September 6, 2005.

URBAN FORESTRY COUNCIL

Vacant seat, succeeding Milton Marks III, resigned, seat 4, must be a representative of non-profit organizations involved in urban forestry or other environmentally-related issues, for the unexpired portion of a two-year term ending April 5, 2005.

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

Vacant seat, succeeding Carla Hollis, resigned, seat 5, must be a woman veteran, for the unexpired portion of a four-year term ending January 31, 2006.

Vacant seat, succeeding Christopher Michel, resigned, seat 10, must be an at-large appointment, for the unexpired portion of a four-year term ending January 31, 2006.

ANIMAL CARE AND CONTROL AGENCY

Thinking about adopting a best friend? San Francisco Animal Care and Control is the agency responsible for our city's lost, abandoned, injured, sick, and mistreated animals. Our animal shelter is open for adoptions every day of the week except city holidays. We have a variety of animals to choose from who need secure, loving homes. Visit us today, at 1200 15th street at Harrison, open every day, except city holidays, from noon to 5:30 p.m., and Wednesdays until 7:00 p.m.. Come visit us today—you'll not only save a life, you'll enrich your own.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO FILE # CMC 04541638

In the matter of the application of Theodore Gabriel for change of name. The application of Theodore Gabriel for change of name having been filed in Court, and it appearing from said application that Theodore Gabriel has filed an application proposing that his/her name be changed to Theodore Gabriel Tasoulas. Now therefore, it is hereby ordered, that all persons interested in said matter do appear before this Court in Department 218 on the 13th day of January, 2004 at 9:00 am of said day to show cause why the application for change of name should not be granted.
DEC. 2,9,16,23, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280989-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: El Rincon, 2700 16th Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94103. This business is conducted by a corporation, signed V.C. Yadav. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 11/24/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/24/04.
DEC. 2,9,16,23, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0281023-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: J.P. Limos, 2794 40th Ave., San Francisco, Ca. 94116. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Jason Peterson. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 11/29/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/29/04.
DEC. 2,9,16,23, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280899-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Butchboy Studios LLC, 596 46th Ave. San Francisco, Ca. 94121. This business is conducted by an limited liability company, signed Joel Hoyer. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 11/22/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/22/04.
DEC. 2,9,16,23, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280945-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: T&G Homecare Services, 101 Farallones Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94112. This business is conducted by a general partnership, signed George Servin. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 11/20/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/23/04.
DEC. 2,9,16,23, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280602-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: HBR Records, 1146 Buchanan Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94115. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Ramon Sapp. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 11/01/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/08/04.
DEC. 2,9,16,23, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280969-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Gold-Diggers (Discount Clothing) 1276 Market Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94102. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Daniel Osunde. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 03/01/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/23/04.
DEC. 2,9,16,23, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280944-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Pettit Import/Export, 950 Noe Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94114. This business is conducted by an individual, signed John LePettit. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on NA. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/23/04.
DEC. 2,9,16,23, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0281235-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: No Mercy Ink, 155 12th Street San Francisco, Ca. 94103. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Jason Peterson. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 12/06/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 12/06/04.
DEC. 2,9,16,23, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0281072-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Sunset Plumbing, 1858 45th Ave. San Francisco, Ca. 94122. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Yehuda Golani. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 03/01/95. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 12/01/04.
DEC. 2,9,16,23, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280886-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Bernal Bike, 1637 Florida Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94110. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Henry F. Kroyer. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 11/20/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/19/04.
DEC. 2,9,16,23, 2004 JAN. 6, 2005

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LEGAL NOTICES

STATEMENT FILE A-0281284-00
The following person(s) are doing business as: LoLo Cup, 2527 San Bruno Ave., San Francisco, Ca. 94134. This business is conducted by a corporation, signed James Hin. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 12/01/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 12/08/04.
DEC.16,23,30 2004 JAN.6 2005

STATEMENT FILE A-0281215-00
The following person(s) are doing business as: Photos By Maurice, 556 Arlington Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94112. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Maurice Magnani. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 12/06/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 12/08/04.
DEC.16,23,30 2004 JAN.6, 2005

STATEMENT FILE A-0281545-00
The following person(s) are doing business as: Kim Phong, 730 Larkin Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94109. This business is conducted by a general partnership, signed by Nu To Ngo Tran. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 12/20/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 12/20/04.
DEC.23,30 2004 JAN.6, 13 2005

STATEMENT FILE A-0281018-00
The following person(s) are doing business as: Nor King Spas, 250 Napoleon Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94124. This business is conducted by an individual, signed David Pallenberg. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 11/19/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/29
DEC. 23, 30 2004 JAN. 6, 13 2005

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LEGAL NOTICES

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS #292

Dear Potential Applicant:
The City and County of San Francisco Human Services Agency (HSA) is seeking contractors to provide transitional housing and support services to 26 homeless families. The Department expects to make two awards through this procurement process. One contract will be to provide 13 families with housing for up to 24 months and comprehensive support services including: crisis and case management, appropriate recreation and program activities for children and youth, and follow-up with families once they have moved to permanent housing. The second contract will be to provide 13 families with housing for up to 24 months, on-site licensed childcare for infants, toddlers and preschool-age children, as well as crisis and case management services. The contracting period for both contracts will be July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006. The Department reserves the right to renew contracts with winning bidders selected through this solicitation for additional years based upon the availability of funding and the performance of both contractors. An RFQ packet may be picked up at SEDIHS, Office of Contract Management, 1650 Mission Street, Suite 300, December 20, 2004. Office hours are from 8:30 AM to 5 PM. The RFQ packet and subsequent updates may be downloaded from the City's website on or after December 20, 2004. Go to [HTTP://SUNSET.CI.SF.CA.US/PBIDS.NSF](http://SUNSET.CI.SF.CA.US/PBIDS.NSF) and click on the "Consultants and Professional Services" link. The Respondents' Conference will be held on January 6, 2005 at 9:30 AM at 1650 Mission St, Suite 300, SF, CA. For further information, call Kimberly Ferguson, at (415) 557-5585. The deadline for submitting response packets is Friday, January 21, 2005 at 4:00 PM. No Exceptions 12/23/2004

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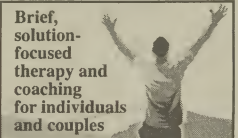
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but we survived and hopefully 2005
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And look forward to your return
Love, your E

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Matters of the heart

'John Cassavetes: Five Films' out on DVD, including 'A Woman Under the Influence.'

page 32

Got Bacon (Kevin)

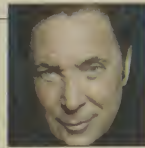
Stars in 'The Woodsman,' talks turkey with BAR.

page 31

It's not unusual

For a confirmed lesbian to have a Tom Jones thing.

page 36



ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

BAY AREA REPORTER

Vol. 34 • No. 52 • 23 December 2004



'The reviewers didn't like us Bradys.'

Marcia, Marcia, Marcia!

Maureen McCormick on love & life as a former Brady

by David R. Guarino

Does she ever tire of the legendary quip, "Marcia, Marcia, Marcia?" What was it really like to work with the handsome, multitalented actor Robert Reed, who led an allegedly closeted gay life amidst the never-ending hype surrounding one of TV's most enduring sitcoms? What of Maureen's alleged romance with sexy *Brady Bunch* co-star Barry Williams? These are among the topics I chatted about with actress Maureen McCormick.

Born in the San Fernando Valley, McCormick made her stage debut at 7. Her charm and natural beauty assured further assignments, including the voice of the original "Chatty Cathy" doll. McCormick also got acting parts in the original "Pillsbury Doughboy" ads.

In 1969, television producer Sherwood Schwartz cast her as eldest daughter Marcia Brady in a bubblegum sitcom which would go on to make television history. *The Brady Bunch* debuted that year, and while it ran for only five years, it retains a cult following to this day. Focusing on the lives of suburban housewife Carol Brady (Florence Henderson), her husband Mike (Robert Reed), children Greg, Marcia, Jan, Bobby, Peter and Cindy and their ever-faithful housekeeper Alice (Ann B. Davis), *The Brady Bunch* was a fluffy, somewhat naïve blend of fun, life lessons and '70s comedy. When the show wrapped in '74, it was followed by a series of highly publicized *Brady*

page 32 ►

Boxing and other unnatural acts

'Million Dollar Baby' Hilary Swank weighs in

by David Lamble

For about the first third of *Million Dollar Baby*, the powerful new film from Clint Eastwood set in the world of female boxers, the viewer may be expecting a distaff version of *Rocky*. Early in the film, Clint looks like a real old codger. He's morphed into Rocky's cantankerous first manager, the one played by Burgess Meredith. The setup seems perfect: Maggie Fitzgerald (Hilary Swank) walks into the rundown gym run by Frankie Dunn (Eastwood), and asks Frankie to train her.

"I don't train girls," Frankie has the raspy voice of a man who's been maintaining a three pack-a-day habit for 50 years.

"Maybe you should. People who see me fight say I'm pretty tough."

"Girlie, tough ain't enough."

Frankie will give in, of course, and help Maggie become the first woman to transcend the freak show of tabloid notoriety, but *Million Dollar Baby* is not about winning a title. Rather, it belongs to that select group of haunting films where living the dream collides with the pitiless laws of physics and the almost whimsical cruelty of the gods. In the same fashion as *Boys Don't Cry* and *Soldier's Girl*, *Million Dollar Baby* offers queer viewers a tantalizing glimpse of a world where gender barriers disappear for a heart-stopping moment.

Just as her Brandon Teena became a tomboy's wet dream of the best little boy in the world, Swank is utterly convincing as a female boxer who knocks out every dame in her path. There are oddly funny moments when Frankie is so overcome by the task at hand that his instructions to Maggie feel like they're torn from the pages of Henry Miller. "I want you to jab her right in the tits, until they turn blue and fall off."

The film wisely eliminates the slightly anti-lesbian tone of the original material. It's based on a short story by boxing-corner man F.X. Toole, born in 1930, the same year as Eastwood, which helps explain the film's debt to an unabashedly old-fashioned school of storytelling. Toole's story reads on the page like it was downloaded

page 36 ►



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Sandra Bernhard turns it out

Bringing her ass, act to SF for NY Eve

by Roberto Friedman

Okay, everyone, let's say it: It's been a tough year. That's a given. But we gotta take heart and keep hope alive! That's what comedian *fabulosa* Sandra Bernhard says, anyway. "We can change it back to a creative, expressive, free world if we're willing to take charge!"

The unsinkable Sandra is coming to our little burg to rally San Francisco spirits and lift our post-Nov. 2 blues, and she's playing two shows on New Year's Eve, 8 & 10:30 p.m., at the Alcazar Theatre, 650 Geary St. We'd say that falls into the category of putting it out there for people who need it.

Blessedly, Out There has seats for the early show, so when she called us up last week to catch us up on her act, we asked Bernhard if she was going to be totally "on" for both shows.

"Of course, of course!" she said, like *duh!* "It's going to be a real end-of-the-year wrap-up!" She'll be givin' 'til it hurts, incarnating her original sex machine, and serving up music and caring and the special strong-Sandra vibe she does so well.

Bernhard's career seems to be in take-off mode again. She has a recurring role in the new season of *The L Word*, which begins in February. She plays an English professor who really whips the young 'uns into shape. But she told the producers from the start that her character was not going to be getting naked and jumping in and out of chicks' beds, so keep it in your pants. She said, "Love is the most shocking act left on Earth." We dig it.

Sandra also has a role in NBC's *Crossing Jordan*, which starts up again Sunday nights in February. Plus she's the mother of a 6-year-old daughter, to whom she has recently been introducing the joys of



Bernhard on motherhood and citizenship: "It's gotta be hands-on."

Hanukkah. Now, Sandra has said on the record before that she's not going to lob her daughter to the press like a human beachball, just so they can bat her around for column-friendly, squib-ready soundbites. The child is off-limits. So instead, we asked her how it felt to be a mother.

"Motherhood keeps on getting better and better, and I keep getting better and better at it. It's not easy, having a child is definitely a work-in-progress. I have some help, but you gotta do it yourself. It's gotta be hands-on."

How does she do it? "When I'm home, I don't go out at night anymore. I mean, I might go out for dinner, but I'm in bed by 10 p.m., because she gets up at 7 a.m. in the morning, and I gotta be ready for it."

Bernhard *en familia* will be arriving in SF one day early, so they can "bop around on Thursday. Then, Friday, I'll spend the day getting ready to do two shows. Then we'll fly out on Saturday."

Wow, her life sounds so full and busy. But we gotta thank Sandra for taking the time to check in, and for jetting her ass to town so she can put it out there "for the kiddos." We don't think she means save the children in this case, we think she means big gay us.

"Oh yeah, I've been coming up to SF since I was 10. It's a big inspirational city for me!" And vice versa, luv. Tix at CityBoxOffice.com.

Love hurts

It's truly the story that keeps on giving: Some attentive readers might recall that last week, Out There did a fair amount of impolite giggling over the big Ellen DeGeneres/Alexandra Hedison split, a breakup that had to happen so Ellen could go do the wild

monkey with Portia de Rossi in-between fits of taping TV. This came hard on the heels of de Rossi giving her own longtime lady, Francesca Gregorini, the old heave-ho, which made "L'Affaire DeGeneres" all the more delicious. We know, Out There needs to get a life, but we don't care, we eat this stuff right up.

Well, it gets better. Seems that *before* they severed the Sapphic knot, Ellen and Alexandra did a big celebrity-couple profile for the cover of the next *Advocate*. Its gist: They're so happy together! Despite the fact that the relationship is now *finito*, *kaput*, toasted chestnut, the glowing portrait-in-print is still going to hit the newsstands as if they were a couple intact, for the magazine's year-end issue.

Ellen acknowledges this is potentially confusing to readers, and she and Hedison have issued a statement through the *Advocate* online in which Hedison admits, "I would never have done this story if I had thought we would not be together today." But honey, didn't you have an *inkling*?

Express clue to *Advocate* editors: So kill the story already! If Ellen can end it, so can you.

House on fire

Well, Ellen & Portia might make wild-beast love in their groovy Hollywood love-shack all day long, but at least it hasn't burned down yet, like the "Love Shack" that supposedly inspired the classic *B-52's* party hit of same name. The *Advocate* reported that the immortalized cabin, set back in a field outside Athens, Georgia, has burned right down to its crispy frame and tin roof.

Boy, we can only imagine the great hootenannies that must have gone down there when singer

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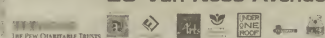
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THEATRE

Having a ball on New Year's Eve

Bay Area stages light up for the holidays

by Richard Dodds

One great thing about going to the theater this New Year's Eve is that you can get home in time to watch Regis Philbin subbing for Dick Clark at the Times Square ball-drop.

But seriously, folks, there are a number of possibilities for revelry of a seated nature on Dec. 31 outside the home. Here are some of those theatrical offerings, all with an 8 p.m. curtain unless otherwise noted.

Striking 12, set on New Year's Eve, gets the prize as being the most seasonally appropriate of the choices. Presented by TheatreWorks in Palo Alto, this musical/concert is a surprisingly enjoyable contemporary variation on the story of the little match-girl. A very agreeable trio calling itself GrooveLily acts out the story with both a wink and a big heart, and performs the eclectic pop-rock score with considerable appeal. Call (650) 903-6000, or go to theatreworks.org.

Its eponymous holiday will be over, but *Irving Berlin's White Christmas* should work just fine on Dec. 31. This Broadway-caliber tryout at the Curran Theatre puts the 1954 movie musical onstage with skill and a hearty helping of warmth. By the final curtain, you should have a smile to take you into 2005. Call 512-7770, or go to bestofbroadway-sf.com.

It's also still Christmas, as well as Hanukkah, at New Conservatory Theatre Center, where Kinsey Sicks is happily harmonizing and turning a few stomachs. *Oy Vey in a Manger* brings back the dra-

gapella quartet for a second year with its proudly bad-taste interpretations of the holidays. Call 861-8972, or go to nctc-sf.org.

New Conservatory is also offering a more somber way to close out 2004. SF playwright Tom W. Kelly takes a bittersweet look at gay romance in various guises in the five short plays under the umbrella title *Significant Others*. Call 861-8972 or go to nctc-sf.org.



The Man Who Came to Dinner, the vintage Kaufman and Hart play, gets a whimsically queer and sometimes downright weird interpretation at Theatre Rhino under John Fisher's direction. Call 861-5079 or go to therhino.org.

There's no nudity in either the Rhino or New Conservatory productions, but *Best of Broadway* is making up for it with *Take Me Out* at the Golden Gate Theatre. Richard Greenberg's play about an openly gay baseball star is an entertaining if sometimes creaky comedy-drama, and, no matter what anyone says, the nudity is resplendently gratuitous. Call 512-7770 or go to bestofbroadway-sf.com.

There are some grim moments and mighty unhappy people in *Polk County* at Berkeley Rep, but before it's over, everyone's singing a joyous gospel song. An excellent cast performs Zora Neale Hurston's long-lost blues musical that should leave you feeling ready for a new year. Call (510) 647-2949, or go to berkeleyrep.org.

Scott Capurro, a Josie's veteran, returns to SF with a Dec. 31 show titled *Erect on New Year's*. The theatrically oriented queer comic is in for one performance

only at the Victoria Theatre at 8 p.m. Tickets are available at tickets.com.

Queer and theatrical are also reasonable adjectives to describe Sandra Bernhard, performing at the Alcazar Theatre on the last evening of 2004 at 8 p.m. — and also at 10:30 p.m. for those who don't mind missing the big ball-drop. Call 392-4400 or go to cityboxoffice.com.

Kosher Christmas

If you're still looking for a way to skip the Christmas juggernaut, Kung Pao Kosher Comedy is back for its 12th year of Chinese food and stand-up comedy. And because it's the brainchild of SF lesbian comic Lisa Geduldig, the performers often have a lezzie lean.

This year that means return visits by Judy Gold, a 6-foot-3 mother of two with a highly quotable mother, and Page Hurwitz, who got her start at Josie's Cabaret. They share the bill with Brad Zimmerman, a 20-year



Josie's Cabaret veteran Scott Capurro returns with *Erect on New Year's*.

standup veteran from New York.

The venue is again the New Asia Restaurant in Chinatown, where eight shows are set for Dec. 23-26. Admission to dinner shows is \$54, and \$36 to the cocktail

shows. Call (925) 275-9005, or go to koshercomedy.com. ▼

Richard Dodds can be reached at BARstage@aol.com.

Curmudgeon attacks

'Man Who Came to Dinner'

by Richard Dodds

In a program note for Theatre Rhino's *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, director John Fisher says his goal is the "gay rehabilitation" of its title character. But Rhino's artistic director has more on his agenda than turning Sheridan Whiteside into a bitchy queen.

With, I suspect, free-wheeling contributions from the cast, he has sought both to deconstruct hoary theatrical conventions and allow at least some of the characters to physically, and cartoonishly, manifest their inner feelings. The result is a very strange brew that can variously amuse, intrigue, perplex, and utterly collapse.

Fisher has also played loose with the 1939 Kaufman and Hart script, manufacturing gay inferences where none could be massaged from the original text. It's one thing to have a young male character display a longing gaze at a scripted mention of San Francisco, and quite another to add a joke about him wearing high



P.A. Cooley cranks up queeniness.

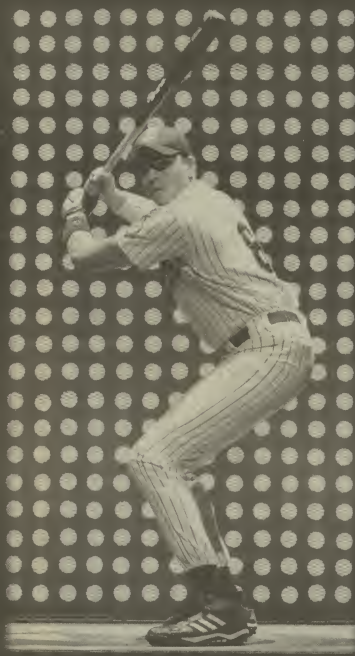
heels. But that's better than an anachronistic "laptop" gag or a historically sloppy reference to Judy Garland.

Kaufman and Hart based Sheridan Whiteside, trapped by a broken hip in a middle-class Midwestern home, on the real-life author, pundit, and curmudgeonly

page 31 ►

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Dark Prince and a showgirl

'Phantom' sings for the camera

by Robert Julian

Andrew Lloyd Webber's *The Phantom of the Opera* arrived onstage as a one-trick pony. The trick was an enormous chandelier that dropped dramatically from the ceiling, stopping just above the seats of the orchestra section. The film version, robbed of this live opportunity, must rise or fall on its intrinsic musicality and director Joel Schumacher's vision. And fall it does.

Despite John Mathieson's beautiful cinematography, Anthony Pratt's exquisite production design, and Alexandra Byrnes wonderful costumes, *Phantom* is a trifle. There is little substance to the music or the story. Schumacher's direction is heavy on bombast, resulting in a film that is overwrought, overthought, and full of itself. In the end, the story is quite silly: deformed circus freak lives in basement of opera and falls for young diva. But *Phantom* is presented in a vainglorious style that only affirms how brilliant Rob Marshall was with his subtle cinematic reinvention of a tired old stage musical called *Chicago*. However, unlike Schumacher, Marshall did not have to deal with Andrew Lloyd Webber.

There should be some sort of law prohibiting composers from producing and writing the screenplays for their own musicals. Unfortunately, there is not. That is why Webber is able to subject viewers to two-and-one-quarter hours of musical mediocrity. The film's casting only compounds the problem.

Emmy Rossum stars as Christine, the object of the phantom's unrequited love. But Rossum bears a significant resemblance to Elizabeth Berkley of *Showgirls* fame and, despite her Snow White visage, it was impossible for this



Andrew Lloyd Webber's one-trick pony comes to the Silver Screen.

reviewer not to fantasize Rossum ripping off her bodice and attempting to slide down a pole while casting a smirk in the direction of an offscreen Gina Gershon. Newcomer Gerard Butler assays the title role with all the melodramatic clichés firmly in place (not that he had any other options), and Patrick Wilson portrays Christine's true love, the Viscount de Chagny, with an earnestness not seen since Charmian Carr trilled "I am 16 Going on 17" in *The Sound of Music*.

Talented Miranda Richardson is wasted in the role of the ballet mistress. And although the vocal performances are all on pitch, it appears only Minnie Driver understands where she is, and what she needs to do. As La Carlotta, the opera company's hammy Italian diva, Driver chews the scenery with great abandon. Bug-eyed and be-wigged, Driver intuitively understands she is trapped in a big,

campy wallow, and her over-the-top performance is the metaphorical whoopee cushion that relieves the heavy-handed sense of self-importance hanging over these proceedings. Prospective patrons should enter at their own risk. ▼

Phantom of the Opera opens December 22.

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Take Me Out

◀ previous page

one another and causing different kinds of sparks. Greenberg manages to craft a memorable string of encounters, several of them genuinely bracing. But there are times, despite director Joe Mantello's flashy production, when the play resembles a construction kit missing a few parts, or making use of lesser materials to fill the gaps.

Lemming's relationship with a born-again player from another team, for example, isn't much developed despite its critical importance to the plot. The play also falls into sitcom situations, and sometimes the comic relief arrives a bit too anxiously on the heels of a serious moment.

Most of the comic relief comes in the form of Mason Marzac, an unathletic gay nerd who is Lemming's new business manager and newbie baseball fan. He swoons in campy fashion over his new client in a role that won Denis O'Hare a Tony Award in the Broadway production. Judging by the New York reviews of O'Hare, T. Scott Cunningham apparently tones down the queen act a few notches, which would seem to be a good thing.

Providing most of the high-

voltage tension is a redneck relief pitcher in the John Rocker mode who, unlike his new teammates, does more than just grumble in the locker room at having to share this manly space with a gay man. Harlon George gives a real sense of danger to this damaged human who Greenberg wisely keeps from becoming a straightforward villain.

As Darren Lemming, an unwilling role model for any group, M.D. Walton has a laidback confidence that serves the role if not igniting it. There is good work from Doug Wert as the team's intellectual and Charles Parnell as the best friend Lemming loses.

A number of other characters don't seem to have much point beyond filling out a baseball roster, and to provide a nine-man shower nude scene that gives you lots of time to compare and contrast. The playwright and director may argue that nudity is an essential part of the storytelling, and in a couple of cases it probably is, but after that it's just gravy. ▼

Take Me Out will run at the Golden Gate Theatre through Jan. 9. Tickets are \$37-\$75. Call 512-7770 or go to bestofbroadway-sf.com.

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Luxuriant musical extravaganzas

Resplendent 'Merlin,' 'Tales of Hoffmann' out on DVD

by Philip Campbell

If you still need to stuff the stockings of the music-lovers in your life and you want to knock their socks off, too, a couple of luxuriant DVD releases should do the trick. That is, if their taste in fantasy tends a little toward the dark side and they like their opera productions with an imaginative edge.

Merlin - Isaac Albéniz; Orchestra and Chorus of Teatro Real de Madrid, José de Eusebio (BBC/Opus Arte)

Conductor-turned-musicologist José de Eusebio won a Grammy and international awards when he first recorded this "lost" opera by composer Isaac Albéniz and English banker/poet Francis Burdett Money-Coutts.

Considered now by many scholars to be the missing link between the isolated Spanish repertoire of the early 20th-century and the rest of Europe, *Merlin* emerges as a genuine lyric drama of cosmopolitan sophistication.

The score sounds like Wagner, with the transparency of Debussy and a touch of Sir Edward Elgar. The libretto is intentionally modeled after Wagner's *Ring*, but it comes off more like Gilbert and



Sullivan on a bad day.

It was Albéniz's genius to overcome the gibberish of the archaic English verse. When the nymph Nivian sings to Merlin, "Grant me to hold your rod," he prevents a raucous audience response by the sheer force of the vocal line.

The Teatro Real production also avoids titters with a staging that preserves the original English text for a Spanish-speaking audience. Director John Dew and choreographer Mei Hong Lin both take the Arthurian legend seriously, and the result is a fluid and compelling tale of power-lust, seduction and betrayal.

Merlin is gorgeous to see, with sets and costumes that look like

Star Wars meets *The Lord of the Rings*, but the main glory of the show comes from the beautiful work of the chorus and orchestra.

Individual singers also make their mark. Baritone David Wilson-Johnson is commanding in the title role. Veteran soprano Carol Vaness makes a convincingly sensuous Nivian, and tenor Stuart Skelton is a stressed but sturdy King Arthur.

The only serious problem occurs with good old Eva Marton, a vocal train-wreck in the part of Morgan le Fay. Her Eva Gabor accent is jarring, and her pitch is downright scary, but she compensates, portraying the conniving enchantress as a desperate mother who only wants her son Mordred to "win" the crown at any cost.

Whatever its textual shortcomings, *Merlin* remains a ripping good yarn filled with pages of exciting and appealing music. Eusebio's labor of love is not only a victory for his musical heritage, but also a real find for listeners who only know Albéniz from his formidable piano works.

The Tales of Hoffmann - Jacques Offenbach; Orchestra and Chorus Opera National de Paris, Jesus Lopez-Cobos (TDK)

Another fascinating fantasy is altogether more familiar to opera fans, but it has suffered so many revisions over the years that every revival is likely to yield new opinions. The extravagant and controversial production by the Opera



Bastille in 2002 is no exception, but it is arguably the best-acted and most cleverly staged version yet. At least on DVD.

Tenor Neil Shicoff (returning to the stage after an illness) is perfectly cast as the hapless drunk who wins a kind of redemption through the agonies of reckless love and unwitting depravity. Partnering him throughout the feverish melee, in a tour de force as the four villains, is baritone Bryn Terfel.

The brilliant director Robert Carsen places the action within an opera house (within an opera house: get it?). The idea is so brilliantly realized that, for once, the whole sprawling masterpiece becomes crazily plausible.

Technically, the production is elaborate to the point of distraction. The sets are an entertainment in themselves, making the

Met's fairy-tale interpretation seem almost provincial by comparison. Ye gods, they even have another orchestra pit up there!

The musical values are particularly strong, so the evening flies by with seamless grace. If some of the singing is a little strained, it is made acceptable by the high level of acting.

Susanne Mentzer recalls the young Frederica von Stade as the Muse and Nicklausse. Local favorite Ruth Ann Swenson is adorable as the mechanical doll Olympia, and Beatrice Uria-Monzon makes up for a less-than-glamorous tone with a particularly alluring performance as the siren Giulietta.

Lopez-Cobos elicits a gorgeous sound from the pit, and the choristers are wonderfully characterized.

Some have complained at the sight of so much flesh in the Venice sequence (wittily performed in the seats of the on-stage theater). Not a problem when it fits the brazenly sexual concept so well.

The night ultimately belonged to Terfel and Shicoff, and they both received screams of approval with the rhythmic clapping accorded by European audiences when they are well and truly pleased.

There may never be a definitive edition of Offenbach's marvelous mess, but this time, the Bastille (Opera, that is) stormed the French, and we are lucky to have it on disc. ▼

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Chinatown

by Jim Nawrocki

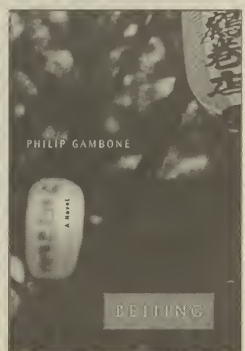
Beijing by Philip Gambone; Terrace Books, \$26.95

When David, the protagonist of Philip Gambone's novel *Beijing*, decides to move to China for one year to work in a medical clinic there, he takes along a copy of Melville's *Moby Dick* as reading material. The choice is emblematic. Like Melville's Ishmael, David embarks on his journey to escape the stag-

nation that seems to have settled upon his life. He's recently lost a lover to AIDS, he's grown perhaps too comfortable and familiar with his surroundings, and his 50th birthday is looming.

The novel is set in 1996, when vestiges of China's old guard were somewhat more visible than they are today. Aside from passing references to Clinton and to China's political history, the story highlights more the social differences between the East and the West rather than the ideological ones. Gambone seems concerned with portraying just how difficult it is for gay men to live in Chinese society, at least in contrast to their European and American counterparts, but he does manage to show them living with a fair amount of freedom.

Gambone sets the stage for David's journey in somewhat predictable ways. The first half of the novel, in particular, seems full of set pieces: a middle-aged narrator ruminating on the passage of time; fleeting recollections of a dead lover that hint at fuller revelations to come; the trusty sidekick who offers knowing advice on life and love; a goodbye scene at the airport. The relationships that David has with key people in his life are depicted in a manner that veers close to cliché. His conversations with his mother are almost paint-by-number. His relationship with Owen is depicted as standard-issue gay; they nag each other slightly, but the reader knows that they will always maintain their affectionate-but-platonic connection. David has the annoying habit of referring to Owen



as "Cupcake," and he invokes other cute-isms that seem to wear thin quickly.

Artful eye

One wants to like *Beijing*. It's a novel that has its heart in the right place, and Gambone's depictions of China are lovingly drawn. In the opening section of Chapter 6, for example, he includes a particularly vivid, almost prose-poem-like passage in which he praises the everyday details of life in China that enchant him so much. His wanderings in the city are full of little surprises, and Gambone depicts much of it with a sensuous and painterly eye.

Gambone relies heavily on exposition. Although this can be effective when he's describing the texture of daily life in China, it does not serve the novel well when Gambone seems to gloss over important plot and character developments. This is especially evident in the novel's depiction of David's relationship with Bosheng, a young artist he meets at a café and falls in love with. Gambone takes care to depict the tenderness of

page 40 ►

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Six degrees of Kevin Bacon

Challenging role as 'The Woodsman'

by David Lamble

Kevin Bacon is wearing sunglasses indoors. Can this man be trusted? Or is it because he has the good sense to shield himself from the glare of a daylong media bath on the latest of a long series of edgy characters he has created for stage and screen?

Bacon was a star on and off Broadway long before he appeared old enough to see some of the plays he was appearing in. He was the leader of a ruthless gang of street toughs who attempt to sell a dead kid to a stoned businessman in Allan Bowne's *Forty-Duce*. His Broadway debut was alongside another old soul, Sean Penn, in the 1983 production of *Slab Boys*.

On screen, he stole every scene he was in for Barry Levinson in *Diner*, as the wise-ass cutup who pops up drunk and in his jockey shorts, having destroyed the nativity scene at a Catholic church in Baltimore. In '91, a four-day acting job in Oliver Stone's *JFK* caused his phone to start ringing. It hasn't stopped. He's in *The Big Picture*, *River Wild*, *Sleepers*, *Mystic River*, *Telling Lies in America*, and *A Few Good Men*.

After all this, critics across the country consider that Bacon may have done his finest work to date as a troubled ex-con in Nicole Kassell's *The Woodsman*. In this taut drama adapted from the stage by Kassell with playwright Steven Fechter, Bacon's Walter emerges into the light after 12 years in prison for having sex with underage girls. Walter knows if he messes up again, he'll be locked up for good.

Supported by an impressive ensemble — Kyra Sedgwick (his real-life wife, author of her own dazzling screen career), rap artists Mos Def and Eve, and veteran character actors Benjamin Bratt and David Alan Grier — it is nevertheless Bacon's film. Walking the fine line between a damaged man who may have turned a corner, or a self-deluded man lying to himself and others, Bacon keeps us guessing. Walter counts the exact number of steps between his unfurnished apartment and the schoolyard across the street — 320 — as he keeps a diary of his inner rage. He has a nervous fas-



Kyra Sedgwick and Kevin Bacon keep us guessing in *The Woodsman*.

cination with the activity of another pedophile, trolling for young boys right by the schoolyard fence, as he follows a young girl in a red coat into a city park.

Native son

The Woodsman may be flawed in its very obvious fairy-tale, allegorical underpinning. Ralph Kramden would send Walter to the moon. Walter will be happy if he can keep riding the #6 bus to his job at a local lumberyard. And to square the circle, the film was shot in Bacon's native Philadelphia.

Bacon says he got the script in an odd way, from a potential investor. "It was this amazing emotional rollercoaster. I felt anger and horror, sadness and compassion, and anger at myself for feeling compassionate. Some times these parts come along, and it's almost as if they choose me."

Perhaps the film's most unsettling moments come during Bacon's scenes with Hannah Pilkes, who plays an 11-year-old birdwatcher, Robin. When Walter asked Robin to sit on his lap, and I made it very clear to her that we were both pretending, that we are professional pretenders. I've worked with kids quite a bit in the past, and often in quite uncomfortable situations. I like them to feel that we are colleagues. I like to make it clear to them that I am

not that character."

A pivotal moment occurs when Walter beats up a man on the street. For a quick second, we see Walter's fists hitting his own face. "People have asked whether or not the character of Candy, who is another pedophile in the neighborhood, actually exists, or exists only in Walter's kind of paranoid imagination."

Bacon adds that this insert of Walter literally beating himself up appears only for a few frames, thus acting subliminally on the audience, in a technique famously pioneered in *The Pawnbroker*. "It's the point at which Walter feels the most self-loathing, and for a character who is subsumed in shame and self-hatred, this is as low as it gets."

Another standout performance is the work turned in by musician Mos Def, as a cop who keeps tabs on Walter, invading his apartment at will, playing his authority card in a subtle but disturbing way. Mos Def's acute use of silences to pace his raging monologues to Walter highlights *The Woodsman's* device of employing minority actors to form the community that will judge Walter's fitness to stay on the outside.

"Mos puts out this gentle threat. He shows that his character is damaged, that he has suffered because of the things that he's had to see in his life as a police officer." ▼

The Woodsman opens Friday.

Man Who Came

◀ page 27

wit Alexander Woolcott. As a professed celibate with a wicked tongue, it's easy enough to project a gay persona onto the character he inspired. After all, Nathan Lane played Whiteside in the most recent Broadway revival.

P.A. Cooley, who has played several Lane roles on SF stages, cranks up the queeniness in a caustic performance that regularly hits the right notes. Cooley is too young for the role, but age-appropriate casting is so ignored here that in some cases it seems part of the opaque master joke.

But it's also probably a way for Fisher to use many Rhino regulars to fill up the large cast, though re-

duced in actual performer numbers with the elimination of a character or two, and by double- and triple-casting.

It's fun to see Matthew Martin (most recently Margo Channing in *Ave About Eve*) in a succession of roles, including those based on Noel Coward (who is turned into a tap-dancer here) and Harpo Marx. Sandy Schlechter adds some quick-change fun to the roles of hostess Mrs. Stanley and her pixilated sister.

There is dependable and/or quirky work from Jeffrey Hartgraves, Kim Larsen, Maryssa Wannlass, Drew Todd, Florian Alessandria, Matt Weimer and Libby O'Connell, among others. Special mention, though not necessarily of the honorable sort, is due David Bicha in the combined roles of the

butler and cook. Bicha goes about as far over the top as possible before leaving the planet, creating a character that is part pet dog, part Peter Pan, and part Tinkerbell.

Allowing director Fisher his curious vision for this theatrical chestnut, there is still the problem that it is not sustained through three acts. Sometimes we are in a theatrical playland equipped with those funny mirrors, but too often the production is content to plod through the well-worn plot machinations without any tricks up its sleeve. ▼

The Man Who Came to Dinner will run at Theatre Rhino through Jan. 9. Tickets are \$15-\$28. Call 861-5079 or go to therhino.org.

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Cassavetes in love

by Matthew Kennedy

John Cassavetes: Five Films
Shadows/Faces/A Woman Under the Influence/The Killing of a Chinese Bookie/Opening Night

At first glance, the Criterion Collection's massive eight-disc encasement of five John Cassavetes movies may look like a hodgepodge of the late director's work. Why include *The Killing of a Chinese Bookie*, but not *Minnie and Moskowitz* or *Gloria*? Is there some order here, or is this what could get licensed? Turns out that the movies contained herein represent those given titles over which Cassavetes had complete artistic control. How fitting that they be packaged together as one impeccable product, supplemented generously by audio commentary, numerous interviews with Cassavetes actors, producers, and crew, extended footage, still photos, a 68-page booklet of essays by and about the man, marketing artwork, and the mesmerizing three-hour-and-20-minute

Charles Kiselyak documentary *A Constant Forge: The Life and Art of John Cassavetes*. Get through all of this and you may well feel like a close personal friend.

All would-be hipsters know Cassavetes is revered as the grandfather of modern indie cinema. With his five-and-dime budgets, his mix of amateur and professional actors and crew, his handheld camera and grainy film stock, today's pauper stylists may crib extensively from his movies. And they do. But what set Cassavetes apart, in addition to being the first, is that his movies are saturated in matters of the heart. Those coarse products of a bygone era aren't rants against an unjust world, or empty exercises in style. They're not even particularly anti-establishment. Lo and behold, they are all about love.

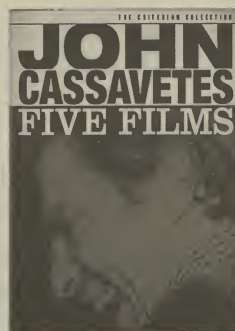
In Cassavetes' 1959 debut film *Shadows*, virtually every scene follows two or more characters in some kind of elemental conflict. Long takes fully absorb the gritty, gray reality of bohemian New York. To watch *Shadows* today is to rediscover the pleasure of seeing

actors doing what moves them in the moment. For the brave actor who doesn't flinch at long takes and unflattering lights, Cassavetes was a gift. Many filmmakers pretend that artistic integrity trumps money, but Cassavetes was the true article. His actors well knew this. When he ran out of money during the making of *Opening Night*, he shut down production with no guarantees for rehiring. He was able to resume shooting three weeks later, and no one in his cast had since taken another job.

Masks off

The critical enthusiasm for *Faces* (1968) confirmed the viability of Cassavetes' artistic philosophies, as his unrelenting close-ups probed middle-aged marital folly for two hours. Gena Rowlands played a vulnerable prostitute, grizzled John Marley a burnt-out businessman, Lynn Carlin a bored housewife, and Seymour Cassel an extroverted hustler, but none of them came anywhere near cliché. Cassavetes was here the most primatological of directors. How often he unmasks our animal yearnings, anger and fear. How often his actors remind us that we are makeup-wearing, cocktail-swilling chimp.

Nowhere is Cassavetes' facility for structure and freedom better evidenced than in *A Woman Under the Influence*, his 1974 chef-d'oeuvre. As a laboring-class couple deeply in love, but unable to communicate that love successfully, Gena Rowlands and Peter Falk turn in gut-churning, heart-breaking, expressively bold performances. One could overlook Falk's quieter brilliance while staring in slack-jawed awe at Rowlands' identity-deprived mad housewife. But while she combines childish impulses with grave self-destruction, he straddles violence, tender-



ness, and good intentions in one coiled mass of anxiety. *Woman* is the perfect movie for Cassavetes' methods. The fog of madness is well-served by mean realism.

Many, including Leonard Maltin and Ephraim Katz, have labeled Cassavetes self-indulgent. Demanding and austere, perhaps, but self-indulgent? Not once does he impose directorial flourishes of the kind we expect from Hitchcock, Fellini, or Spielberg. He gave everything he had — money, script, crew, ideas, time, loyalty, ego, and energy — to his actors and their search for emotional honesty. They returned his graciousness with performances startling in their disregard of flattery. He shot in sequence, and actors weren't asked to hit their marks. Instead, they rolled freely on while the crew did its best to keep up. As a result, those gross imperfections of camera and sound became scars of honor. "Nothing technical was going to get in the way," summarizes Bo Harwood, sound recordist and composer for *A Woman Under the Influence*. Indeed, who wants to see Mabel's breakdown in crisp detail?

Strip mined

The Killing of a Chinese Bookie (1976) is the least-honored movie of the bunch. The tried conventions here are: unhurried actors playing to each other rather than

the camera, the alienating urban landscape, and the sense of improvisation that doesn't betray careful planning. But this exercise in revamped noir lacks the emotional penetration of the other films in this package. *Chinese Bookie* does offer a neat microcosm of Cassavetes in the movie business, with the central conflict between gangsters (i.e., studio money men) and the creative impresario of a strip joint, played with languid competence by Ben Gazzara. But the banality of the skeleton plot, ironically told a thousand times during the studio system, cannot be overcome by Cassavetes' idiosyncrasies.

Ostensibly a study of aging, *Opening Night* (1977) lays bare a life dedicated to art. Myrtle Gordon (Rowlands again, blessedly) is a 40ish actress who witnesses the accidental death of a young fan. As Myrtle rehearses for a play about getting older, she finds her emotions log-jammed by personal crisis. With no husband and no children, her identity is wholly consumed by her working life. When that fails her, what is left?

Opening Night traverses the same territory of female psychosis explored by Tennessee Williams (*Sweet Bird of Youth*) and Joseph Mankiewicz (*All About Eve*), but all similarities end there. Cassavetes played on ambiguity much more than those two sophisticated populists. Was the young girl part of Myrtle's imagination? Do the two of them, taken together with the older playwright (Joan Blondell), form Acts I, II & III of a woman's life? Cassavetes isn't telling. He might see explanations as a didactic cop-out, or an underestimation of the audience. "You have to fight everyday to stop from censoring yourself," he once said, "because in censoring yourself,

page 41 ►

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Marcia, Marcia

◀ Arts cover

Bunch specials, and two feature-length films.

David Guarino: When you signed on to do *The Brady Bunch*, did you have any clue as to how popular it was going to be?

Maureen McCormick: Oh my God, none of us did! Because it played OK for a Friday night show, but it didn't do great, and the reviewers didn't like us. So actually I didn't think we'd make it a year. I really don't think anyone did.

Is it true that your TV father, Robert Reed, was temperamental and often difficult?

I think the rumors have been blown way out of proportion. He was a great actor, first of all. You know, he was doing *The Defenders* before *Brady Bunch*, an incredible drama series. He was great at Shakespeare, and honestly, I think he was under contract with Paramount, so he pretty much had to do the show. From what I heard, they wanted Gene Hackman to do it, but they went with Bob Reed.

He was fighting to keep the show as realistic as possible. We all know it wasn't really realistic. I don't know if there are any families that are really like the Bradys, but it was a dream thing of what we all want a family to be like. But it's not realistic. I think there were scenes where Reed would go, "OK, this would not happen in real life." He would say, "Can't we do it realistically?" To me, he always



'It played OK for a Friday night.'

seemed happy on the set, however I think he was uncomfortable with some of the things the producers wanted him to do.

Did you know he was gay?

He never talked to me about his sexuality. I think he had one of the biggest hearts, it was just so incredibly sad when he took ill and died so young.

Is it really as hard to come out in Hollywood as people say? It was obviously very difficult for Reed to do so within the system at the time.

Well, honestly, who in show business ever really comes out and tells you everything? And why should they? To me, it doesn't make any difference whether someone is gay or straight. What's important is that someone is honest and a good person. Hopefully, we'll all learn, because people are coming out more, just to accept people and love them.

Of the people you worked with on *The Brady Bunch*, who was your favorite?

One week it would be this person, and the next week somebody else. I remember Ann B. Davis having a big party at her house at Halloween, and she decorated her whole house. I thought, this lady who has no children totally went out of her way to make this party really special. She taught us all how to needlepoint.

We'd go spend a Christmas with Florence [Henderson] and visit her family in New York, Bob Reed took us to Europe, Barry [Williams] and I had a crush on each other for a while, and I had a crush on Chris Knight. I can't say I had a favorite, because I loved them all. All of us were needlepointing on the set, even the guys!

Tell me about your relationship with Barry Williams.

It was a kind of teenage crush, you know? Nothing heavy at all. It didn't last long. But I have to say I have crushes on and off with most every man in my life. I had a crush on Michael Cole; I had crushes on Jack Klugman and Tony Randall! I had crushes on crew guys on *Brady*. Yeah, there are a lot of cuties!

TV Guide listed the *Brady Bunch* specials among the 50...

Worst shows of all time! It broke my heart! Honestly, I have to agree with them. I really do. I mean, to me it was, like, a laugh. I mean, they are what they are.

Is it scary to watch yourself? Very scary. ▼

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San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus in Home for the Holidays @ Castro Theatre

Golden Gate Performing Arts presents the world-renowned San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus, under the baton of Dr. Kathleen McGuire, Artistic Director and Conductor, in their 15th Annual Home for the Holidays musical extravaganza. The beloved Castro Theatre will host this glittering show, al-

ways a hit with the audience. This Christmas Eve, the Chorus offers three shows, at 5, 7 and 9pm. Special guests include the Lesbian/Gay Chorus of San Francisco (9pm show only). With special permission from Oxford University Press, this year's Home for the Holidays program features a new arrangement for men's chorus of John Rutter's "Gloria," celebrating the 30th anniversary of this renowned choral masterpiece. Another highlight is the contemporary version of Handel's Hallelujah Chorus from A Soulful Celebration, complete with the crowd-pleasing lyric-flash-card nuns! Home for the Holidays celebrates Christ-

mas, Hanukkah, Winter Solstice and Kwanzaa, as well as the sheer joy of being with "family." And yes, Virginia, there is a traditional audience sing-along! General Admission: \$15 each for Dec. 24 shows. Castro Theatre, 429 Castro St. Tix/info: 415-865-3650; www.sfgmcc.org

Celebrate Christmas @ MCC-SF

Celebrate Christmas with MCC San Francisco. Candlelight Service of Lesson & Carols, with ancient and contemporary readings, choral and special music, an inspirational message from Rev. Dr. G. Penny Nixon and Communion. MCC San Francisco "are a beloved community joining together from diverse spiritual backgrounds and ministering primarily within the Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgendered community as a house of prayer for all people and a home for queer spirituality. We are working to transform the world, beginning with ourselves, to be a place where every life matters and every person belongs." Holiday social starting at 9:30pm; 11pm Worship. Metropolitan Community Church of San Francisco, 150 Eureka St. (btwn 18th & 19th in the Castro). Info: 415-863-4436 (MCC San Francisco Office); www.mccsf.org

Seth Montfort @ Victorian Englander House

Victorian Englander House presents Seth Montfort's Christmas Eve Piano Concerts: 1. The Complete Christmas Music of Liszt (7pm). 2. Christmas and Solstice Music (9pm). Two Gargantuan Piano Battles in Symphony Space. 1. Old World Piano Symphony A. Castle B. Cathedral C. Carnival. 2. Aztec Piano Symphony. 3. The Complete Christmas Music of Liszt (11pm). \$15 each or \$20 for all 3 Concerts. Victorian Englander House, 807 Franklin St. @ Turk. Info: 415. 362. 6080; www.sfcassicalmusic.com

Kung Pao Kosher Comedy @ New Asia Restaurant

The 12th Annual Kung Pao Kosher Comedy. Jewish comedy on Christmas in a Chinese Restaurant (where else?). Come celebrate Christmas the Jewish Way — in a Chinese restaurant with Jewish comedians. Now in its 12th year, Kung Pao Kosher Comedy answers the age-old question, "What are Jews supposed to do on Christmas?" What started as a joke has now become an institution in San Francisco, giving 3000 comedy aficionados and those escaping "Christmas-mania" an alternative to Jingle Bells and The Nutcracker. The shows feature four hot and sour Jewish comedians. Judy Gold (back by popular demand), Page Hurwitz, Brad Zimmerman, & Lisa Geduldig. It's the Bar Mitzvah you never had — and you don't have to be Jewish to enjoy it! Partial proceeds benefit: Jewish Coalition for Literacy AND Laughing Stock (offering free improv comedy workshops to people with HIV/AIDS, cancer, and other life-threatening diseases). Tix: Dinner Show: \$54. -Cocktail Show: \$36. Runs Thu., Dec. 23-26. New Asia Restaurant, 772 Pacific Ave, Chinatown, SF. Tix/info: 925-275-9005; www.koshercomedy.com

Man Who Came To Dinner @ Theatre Rhinoceros

Opening night: Theatre Rhinoceros continues its 27th Season with the timeless American classic comedy/farce, The Man Who Came To Dinner, written by Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman. Everyone's favorite nasty houseguest is here to ruin everyone's favorite holiday. This holiday feast stars that irrepressible scamp and Theatre Rhinoceros favorite, P.A. Cooley as Sheridan

Whiteside — The Houseguest from Hell. Directed by John Fisher. \$15-\$28. Showtimes: Wed.-Sat. at 8pm; Sun. Eves at 7pm; Sun. Mats at 3pm. There are NO performances on Dec. 25 and Jan. 1. Main stage, Theatre Rhinoceros, 2926 16th St. (btwn Mission / So. Van Ness). Tix: 415-861-5079. Info: www.theatrhino.org

7576; www.victoriatheatre.org

Anti X-Mas Slumberfest @ 924 Gilman, Berkeley

Fuck Presents: Anti Christmas Slumberfest 2004. Come Watch Movies With Punks! All ages. Free. Gilman is run by volunteers. If you'd like to work, show up an hour before showtime and sign up to work. All Friday and Saturday shows are at 8pm. 924 Gilman St. at 8th, North Berkeley. Info: 510-525-9926; www.924gilman.org

Golden Bough's A Celtic Christmas @ Old First Church

Old First Concerts presents A Celtic Christmas, festive merrymaking with Golden Bough. A Christmas Eve concert of rare traditional Scots, Irish and Welsh carols and unique songs of Winter. \$15 gen'l adm; \$12 student/senior. Old First Church, 1751 Sacramento St. Tix: 415-474-1608.

Calendare by Mark Mardon



Nancy Bower and Josh Lenn ignite passions in The Dark Room.

Princess Bride — the Play

Last Saturday night at The Dark Room, a tiny hole of a theater in the Mission, a wonderful group of players put on Impossible Production's *Princess Bride* — *The Play*, inspired by the classic tale of high adventure and true romance by William Goldman. They were magnificent. Why anyone would go to see gorgeous but inaccessible Jude Law on screen this coming January when they can go see gorgeous, accessible, and brilliantly talented Josh Lenn live in the flesh, up close in an intimate setting, in the role of our hero Westley — well, pretty much anyone in The Dark Room audience could tell you: Josh Lenn alone, for the mere \$15 price of the theater seat, is a far, far better bargain than Law for \$8.50, plus you get to see Lenn in fetching black tights for much of the play!

A leading man is no better than the company he keeps, and fortunately Lenn was part of the best ensemble imaginable! Lenn's leading lady, Nancy Bower as Buttercup, was every bit as funny and beautiful as Julia Roberts, maybe even more talented, and yet there she was, right in our faces, making us break up in hysterics and marveling at her ability to look simultaneously blousy and regal.

I came to this play a *Princess Bride* virgin, never having read the story or seen the movie, and the show brought me a childhood rush. Without other faces or voices to associate with the fairy tale of pirates, princesses, castles and sailing ships, I will now forever link the characters with the very memorable Dark Room cast, with shining performances by everyone, including the chisel-faced John P. Filgas as a delightfully vile Prince Humperdinck; the superbly villainous Seanetta as Vizzini the Sicilian, with his spitting, sputtering, and highly mobile facial antics; the amazingly huge, completely lovable, immensely watchable Jim Fourniadis as Fezzik the giant; the engaging storytelling manner of Don Wood as Grandfather; and my personal favorite — because I was dazzled by his charming character's Johnny Depp-like pirate smile, accent, bravado and swordsmanship — Cameron Eng as Inigo the fencer.

Plot recap: "The impossibly lovely Buttercup falls in love with Westley, a poor, perfect farm boy who dies at the hands of the Dread Pirate Roberts. The fabled hunter, Prince Humperdinck, convinces Buttercup to marry him, but not before the land's most notorious criminal ensemble, Vizzini the Sicilian, Fezzik the giant and Inigo the fencer, kidnap her — with the mysterious Man in Black hot on their trail. They face the Cliffs of Insanity, traverse the Fire Swamp, rage against the Machine and go to the Chapel of Love; but they'll need a Miracle before this inconceivable epic of passions ends happily ever after."

Play notes: Directed by Cameron Eng and Jim Fourniadis; produced by Erin Ohanneson and Cameron Eng. Starring: Don Wood, Nancy Bower, Josh Lenn, John Filgas, Mark Para, Cameron Eng, Jim Fourniadis, Seanetta, Laura Drus, and Patrick Biggs.

Tickets are \$15 at door; \$12.50 at www.acteva.com/go/impprod. Plays Fri. & Sat. at 8pm and Sun. at 4pm; Jan. 14, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 28, 29, and 30, 2005. The Dark Room Theater, 2263 Mission St (btwn 18th & 19th). Info: www.darkroomsf.com ▼



Judy Gold, above, joins Page Hurwitz, Brad Zimmerman and Lisa Geduldig for a night of Jewish humor in a Chinese restaurant: The 12th Annual Kung Pao Kosher Comedy at New Asia Restaurant. See Friday.

Telegraph Ave. Holiday Street Fair, Berkeley

More than 200 street artists, merchants, community groups, musicians and other entertainers will fill Telegraph Avenue between Dwight Way and Bancroft Way during this festive and vibrant annual crafts fair. The Telegraph Avenue Holiday Street Fair offers handcrafts by some of Northern California's finest artists. Find fine art originals and inexpensive holiday gift items. Enjoy great music, food of all types, festive lights, and a friendly, multicultural shopping experience for all ages. All are warmly invited. 11am-6pm Thu. & Fri., Dec. 23 & 24

Spike & Mike's Sick and Twisted Festival of Animation

@ Victoria Theatre
Held over: The brand new *Sick and Twisted Festival of Animation* will premiere 23 new short animated films and only two repeats: No Neck Joe, and by audience request, Here Comes Dr. Tran. New titles include Proper Urinal Etiquette and The Boy Who Could Smell the Future, both by Kurt Nellis; RIP WACK by Josh Prikey; The Two Minute Itch by Eric Favela; Krazy Kock by Bill Plympton; Quack Off by Justin Wright; Hippie Juice by Chris Crossland and Ryan Reznick; Cat Ciao by Sam Chen; and Three New Happy Tree Friends episodes by Mondo Media. \$9. Show dates: Fridays & Saturdays, Dec. 24* & 25, Jan. 1, 7 & 8, 14 & 15, 21 & 22, 28 & 29. Showtimes: 7:30pm, 9:30pm & Midnight (*only one show on Dec. 24th at 9:30pm). Victoria Theatre, 2961 16th St. Info: 415-863-

Sat 25

Tenderloin Tessie Holiday Dinner @ Unitarian Church

Christmas dinner served at The First Unitarian Church. Volunteers needed Fri., Dec. 24 4-7pm and Sat., Dec. 25, 8-11am and 12:30-4pm. Clean-up from 4-7pm greatly needed & appreciated. Since 1974 Tenderloin Tessie Holiday Dinners has fed the community of San Francisco on Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter. Enjoy the season as a volunteer or guest in a friendly family environment that welcomes all factions of the community, including families with children, the elderly, poor, rich, transient, and neighbors of all ethnicities, genders and identities. The dinners are a sit-down affair offering ham or turkey, salads, bread, vegetables, yams, potatoes, stuffing, dessert and beverage. Gift bags distributed include snacks, juices, energy bars, toiletries and other items. First Unitarian Church, 1187 Franklin St. at Geary & Gough. To volunteer call Tom Basch at 415-922-0422.

Karla LaVey's Black X-Mass @ Elbo Room

In the mood for something completely different this "holiday season"? Let your inner demon out! The First Satanic Church presents Karla LaVey's Black X-Mass, a rock/noise/live-art event featuring Graves Bros. Deluxe, K-Rob, Sixes, Rubber-O-Cement, Therman Barney, Pianist George Michalski, Fumi & Aerobics King. Costumes/fetish welcome. \$6.66. 9pm. Valencia near 17th. Info: 415-552-7788.



Don't miss the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus in "Home for the Holidays" at the Castro Theatre. See Friday.



The courageous, out Rev. Beth Stroud (center) appears in the PBS production of *The Congregation*, airing at 9:30 p.m. on KQED TV 9. See Wednesday.

Sun 26

Kinsey Sicks: Oy Vey in a Manger! @ NCTC

America's Favorite Dragapella Beauty Shop Quartet return to New Conservatory Theatre Center with their holiday hit, *Kinsey Sicks: Oy Vey in a Manger!* This year, four stars shine over Bethlehem as the Kinsey Sicks deploy their biting musical wit and over-the-top drag in the global effort to stamp out holiday cheer. Featuring Ben Schatz as "Rachel," Irwin Keller as "Winnie," Chris Dille as "Trampolina" and Jeff Manabat as "Trixie." \$25-\$35. Wed.-Fri. 8pm; Sat. & New Year's Eve at 7:30pm & 10pm. Thru Dec. 31 (no shows Dec. 24 & 25). NCTC, 25 Van Ness Ave. Tix/info: 415-861-8972; www.nctcsf.org.

SF Hiking Club

@ Montara Mountain

Enjoy terrific views of the rugged coast from above Pacifica. It's a moderately strenuous 9-10 mile hike with a 1,300-ft. elevation gain. Meet 9am under the large Safeway sign at Market & Dolores. Info: www.sfhiking.com

Wesla Whitfield

@ Empire Plush Room

In concert: One of San Francisco's favorite divas, Wesla Whitfield, who will be celebrating her 25th anniversary with a special holiday show, "In My Life," accompanied by her husband Mike Greensill on piano, and John Wiitala on bass. \$25-\$30. 8pm. Special New Year's Eve show \$45 & \$90;

10:30pm). Thru Jan. 9. Tix: 415-885-2800; www.ticketweb.com

Decadence After-X-mas Party @ Madrone Lounge

Celebrate Decadence After-xmas Party Drinks, dancing, and giftbags for the first 25 people!! From 6PM 'till midnight DJ-Nikita S.F. Look for ad in GLOSS Magazine coming out Dec. 17. \$4 at door; free drink with ad. At Madrone Lounge, 500 Divisadero @ Fell.

Mon 27

Lunatique Fantastique + Cirque Du Somethin' @ The Marsh

The Marsh, a breeding ground for new performance, presents two family-friendly offerings for the holidays: Lunatique Fantastique's *The Wrapping Paper Caper*, in which Liebe Wetzel and her puppetry troupe make wrapping paraphernalia come to life in a wild and wacky Bogart-esque detective story, with characters ranging from an elegant wrapping-paper femme fatale to a pesky Styrofoam peanut man. Plus: *Cirque Du Somethin'* — in which the dynamic clown duo of Unique Derique and Moshe "YooWho" Cohen present a feast of frivolity, employing Hambone Body Drumming, circus skills, and physical comedy, with rubber chickens and other props. \$10-\$12 for *The Wrapping Paper Caper* (2pm); \$5-\$15 *Cirque Du Somethin'* (3:30pm). Shows on Dec. 27, 28, 29, 30 & Jan. 2.

The Marsh, 1062 Valencia St. (btwn 21st/22nd). Tix: 415-826-5750; ticketweb.com. Info: www.themarsh.org

Tue 28

Star Search w/Peaches Christ @ Trannyshack

Who will be the next big Trannyshack star of 2005? Find out when Peaches Christ ("Midnight Mass") hosts the Trannyshack year-end institution, *Star Search*, with celebrity judges Tweaka Turner, Putanesca and Heklina. DJ Derek spins. Mi\$\$ Chocolate takes your money and innocence at the door. \$7 cover. 10pm-3am (show at midnight). The Stud, 9th & Harrison. Info: www.heklina.com

Wed 29

The Congregation

@ PBS/KQED TV 9

Oscar and Emmy winning producers Alan and Susan Raymond spent two years documenting the trials and tribulations of a Methodist church and congregation in Philadelphia. *The Congregation* illustrates the challenges all established church communities face as they adapt to dramatically evolving societal views on the role of churches in our lives. In this film the First United Methodist Church of Germantown must grapple with declining membership, loss of a strong, beloved, long time pastor, and factional divisions within the congregation that threaten its very existence. The film is punctuated by the associate pastor's stunning public profession of her homosexuality in violation of Methodist doctrine, and the resulting trial before Church officials that determines her future as a minister. Airs at 9:30pm on local PBS affiliate station KQED TV 9.

big a LiTLe A/Das Yellow Swans @ Hemlock

Punk rock show featuring the bands big a LiTLe A and Das Yellow Swans. \$6 cover. 10pm. 21+ w/ID. Hemlock, 1131 Polk St. at Post. Info: 415-923-0923

Thu 30

The Trawggs/A Tension/Ponies/Appreciation @ Eagle Tavern

Thursday Night Live at the Eagle presents The Trawggs featuring John Dwyer (Coachwhips; Orinoka Crash Suite aka OCS, etc.); A Tension; The Ponies (from Arizona); and Appreciation. \$5. 9pm. 21+ w/ID. Eagle Tavern, 398 12th St. at Harrison. Info: www.sfeagle.com

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A wealth of cartoons, including the ones pictured here, will be shown at the holiday treat, *Spike & Mike's Sick and Twisted Festival of Animation* at the Victoria Theatre. See Friday.

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Tom Jones: the lesbian perspective

Report from the front: It's a panty party at the Fillmore

by Lisa Geduldig

Last Thursday night, I went with five lesbian friends to see aging sex symbol Tom Jones gyrate onstage at The Fillmore. I think he sang also. Yes, I was one of those pussycats who purred and threw her underwear. Odd but true. I brought "panties" (cotton briefs, not a silk thong) and threw them onstage early in the show and got his attention.

Hordes of women (and one man — straight, I think) were throwing them onstage all night. Somehow, he managed not to trip. The stage had dozens of pairs on it by the end of the show. I can't imagine underwear being hurled at me while I'm onstage in the middle of telling a joke — or maybe I can.

A friend of mine made a sign that said "Lesbian Pussycats ♥ Tom" and held it up several times, successfully getting his attention along with a look of confusion. I

guess he didn't realize his fan-base. I was closer (second row, standing), so I grabbed the sign at one point and danced with it, pushing it back and forth in the air toward him. He noticed the sign, his eyes bulged out of his head, and he threw me a kiss. Though a lezzie through and through, it was titillating to get the attention of the gyrator himself.

One woman somehow got onstage as he was starting to sing "What's New, Pussycat?" and

picked up a pair of undies and started flossing with them. Tom was turned around toward his band at the time, and then he noticed her. It threw him off, and he joked, "How did she get up here?" She was immediately escorted off-stage, and he continued singing.

The audience was a mix of ages, male and female, families, and at least six screaming lesbians. The highlight (well, one of many) was his crooning "It's Not Unusual." ▼



Lesbian pussycats ♥ Tom.

Hallelujah chorus, amen!

by Mark Mardon

It was like being in front of a cozy fire with several hundred of your closest gay friends. The Castro Theatre was all aglow at last Thursday's packed holiday concert by the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus (SFGMC), the 15th annual *Home for the Holidays*, attended by a loyal following of lesbians, gay men and their admirers from around the Bay Area, across the nation, and as far away as Ireland.

Artistic Director & Conductor Dr. Kathleen McGuire, who took

up the SFGMC baton in 2000, led the showcase of songs celebrating Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa, the centerpiece an extended *Gloria* by John Rutter. On hand for the affair were The Lollipop Guild (Paul Saccone, Music Director), Vocal Minority (Scott Mills, Music Director), guest artists Don Tatro (soprano), Timothy Dent (percussion), Aaron Priskorn (trumpet), Dr. David Schofield (organ) and Julie Williamson (flute). A special ring out to Bell Appeal from Bethany United Methodist Church, who chimed in with "Hark the Herald Angels Sing," and "O Holy Night," accompanied by flautists Bai Pham and Julie Williamson.

During the show's auction seg-

ment, a gentlemanly bear with a great sense of humor was the winning bidder in the audience, putting up a whopping \$1,000 for the privilege of conducting "Deck the Halls." By the time everyone had their keys out, jingling along with "Jingle Bells," the spirit in the hall was of a big, happy, gay family gathered around the Christmas tree.

This Christmas Eve, Dec. 24, you can experience the heavenly SFGMC in action at any of three shows, at 5, 7 and 9 p.m. Special guests will include the Lesbian/Gay Chorus of San Francisco (9 p.m. show only). Tickets are \$15 each. Call the SFGMC at (415) 865-3650, or visit online at www.sfgmc.org. ▼



San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus plays three shows on Christmas Eve.

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\$ Million Baby

◀ Arts cover

from the ninth circle of hell:
"Boxing is an unnatural act," whispered the voice. "Instead of running from pain, in boxing you step to it. Once you've made the

decision to be a fighter, you gotta know how to fight, because no matter how tough you are, these dudes with the big dicks will knock you out."

Scrap iron

Million Dollar Baby offers a reprieve from being stuck inside of Frankie's head in the form of his best friend, Eddie "Scrap Iron" Dupris (Morgan Freeman). Freeman's voice, with the mellifluous richness of a jazz soloist who's performing his riffs under the influence of a shot of the best-bonded whiskey, makes painless the realms of inside boxing knowledge that we must get, without feeling that we're being lectured to.

Clint and Morgan get along like an old married couple. Eddie, who knows that Frankie still feels guilty about not stopping Eddie's last fight before the loss of an eye, is instrumental in persuading his friend to train the lady boxer. Freeman's uncanny underplaying of his lines enables him to deliver bad news with the impact of softly-fallen snow, as when he warns Frankie that his last great heavyweight hope is about to leave him for greener pastures: "That man is a rubdown whore. Today, he doesn't want one."

Eastwood's almost total lack of vanity and ego as an actor allows him to surround himself with superior performers, and gives him the wisdom (missing from several

of Woody Allen's recent shaky stabs at geezer love) to keep the romance with Swank in the father/daughter vein.

In his 1998 thriller *True Crime*, Eastwood delivered an impassioned editorial against the death penalty. *Million Dollar Baby* is an equally eloquent plea on an even touchier subject. The film's little fight-family will face a soul-searching test on the true nature of love, and will learn, as many of us have since the onslaught of AIDS, how difficult it is to follow the referee's pre-fight instructions: to protect yourself at all times. ▼

Opens Saturday at the Metreon, opens wide Jan. 7.

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Castro Theatre protest



Protesters outside the Castro Theatre Saturday, December 18, including Jim Fishman, right, sign petitions circulated by Ariella Ben-Dov, second from left, urging owner Ted Nasser to rehire longtime programmer Anita Monga, who was fired several weeks ago. Demonstrators also asked patrons to boycott the concession stand, a tactic designed to show displeasure with the personnel changes without hurting upcoming film festivals. Some theater lovers are concerned that Nasser will stop showing gay films at the theater, but he said he has no plans to do so and has hired a new programmer. The current theater calendar shows a variety of films set to screen over the next two months, including *A Star is Born*, *Shooting Porn*, and *Head-On*. The Berlin and Beyond Film Festival opens January 6.

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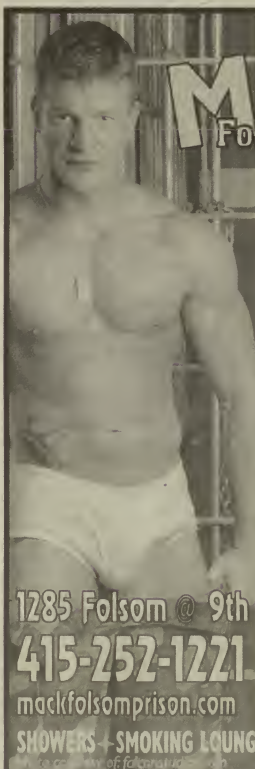
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Into the home stretch

Love, leather and unity for the holidays

by Mister Marcus

The year is almost over and as usual, it is a time of reflection for many of us and developing an optimistic attitude for the coming year. There were gains and losses, too numerous to mention here. Those who would deny us our constitutional rights again threaten our civil rights. It is a classic irony that the descendants of those who fled foreign countries because of religious or political repression are doing the same thing in this day and age that their ancestors abhorred.

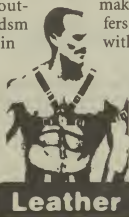
And if that's not enough, think of those gays and lesbians who still discriminate against the leather/bdsm community. It's a vicious cycle we contend with, but there's hope out there. The National Coalition for Sexual Freedom is in the forefront of fighting the bigots, of whatever persuasion; the HRFC finally came to the realization that without a cohesive population including the leather/bdsm communities, their efforts would be hollow.

The battles ahead seem insurmountable, but your support of efforts to beat back the surge of anti-gay and anti-gay marriages is paramount. The NGLTF under the enlightened leadership of Matt Foreman made an outreach to the leather/bdsm community at IML in Chicago last May. It should not have come as a surprise to observers. With unity and coalitions, there can be no progress and as far as many are concerned, it was another step in the right direction.

Where it will end is open to conjecture. It's a good idea to have an optimistic outlook and hope. The holiday season is here and we can only celebrate our victories and hope the future will be more positive.

Bells are ringing, cash is jingling

There seems to be a positive attitude in the neighborhoods. Shoppers are flooding the Castro/Upper Market/Duboce Triangle area, the Valencia Street corridor, as well as the Haight, both Upper and Lower. It's beginning to look like another gay Mecca on Valencia Street with gay-owned businesses popping up every other week.



Leather

The leather stores are ringing up sales at a steady pace and 3 out of 5 people are buying gifts either for themselves or for others on web sites everywhere. Donations of goods, services and cash are making their way into the coffers of those agencies that deal with the sick, the infirm, the homeless, the hungry and the needy in our midst. Shows, movies, musical reviews, plays and choral groups are enjoying enthusiastic audiences and the bars seem to be filled with merry-makers in all areas.

The season is upon us with private and public parties and it looks good everywhere.

Our community lost some tireless and long-time activists and fundraisers, too many to list here and not just in San Francisco but across the nation. Daddy Alan Selby in San Francisco and Daddy Frank Puckett in Atlanta come to mind. It was an honor to collaborate with both these gentle leather men who have left legacies to be emulated by not only men but women as well. Celebrations held in honor of both men were mammoth and fitting for both. And it was both righteous and pleasing to see that both men were recipients of honors while they were alive instead of posthumously.

Both never failed to be the epitome of manners and respect. Our community mourns these losses but icons like Alan Selby and the beloved "Mr. Puckett" will never be forgotten.

Scam alert!

Be on your guard, leather tribe! Scam artists are lurking. Whether this is an organized group of scam artists or various individuals acting on their own (or both), the threat is out there and you should be aware that it could happen to you. The scam goes like this:

You receive (usually collect) a phone call at a late hour of the night. The caller identifies himself (usually a male voice) as a leather titleholder who is in a strange city and has either been mugged, had his/her car stolen or experienced an accident of some type.

The caller asks you to wire funds ranging from \$200 to \$500 so he/she can get his car fixed or buy a plane ticket to get home, or to pay for medical expenses that allegedly occurred.

Many, believe me, many of you have fallen for this line! Many of you are too embarrassed to admit you've been "taken" by persons unknown. Police agencies and Western Union have not acted responsibly in these affairs. If you

next page ►



Baltimore, Maryland, was alive with the leather spirit for that city's "12 Days of Christmas" fundraiser, which garnered nearly \$8,000 for three charities. From left are Mary Elizabeth Boyd (Mrs. Claus), IML Jason Hendrix, and Al Santora (Santa Claus).

EVENTURES IN LEATHER

Friday, January 31

For all practical purposes, the Year of the Monkey ends. We are now in the Year of the Rooster (or cock) depending on your whimsy. Disco parties, bar parties, private parties. Remember to choose a designated driver. The CHP will be out in full force.

Saturday, January 8

The Gauntlet II kicks off the Mr. Los Angeles Leather 2005 season tonight with the Mr. Gauntlet II Leather contest.

Weekend, January 14-16

Mid-Atlantic Leather weekend by the Centaur MC in Washington, DC. For details, surf to: www.leatherweekend.com.

Same weekend the Sun Bears host a weekend in San Diego with a side trip to Rosarita Beach in Mexico.

Week of January 23-30

"Beef Dip: is a bear/leather weekend cruise to

Puerto Vallarta with scads of events geared to exhaust you in the land of the Aztecs.

Weekend, January 28-30

Mr. Chicago Leather weekend at the Touche? Bar. Joey Arteaga will step aside for a successor. Cold but always fun in Chicago!

Flesh & Fantasy Weekend in Dallas with the Mr. Texas Leather Contest and the So. Central Leather Sir/boy, and community bootblack contest.

Mr. Padlock Leather contest in Phoenix, AZ, but no info at my deadline.

Weekend, February 4-6

Heart of America Weekend in Kansas City, MO at the Dixie Belle. Choosing Heart of America Leather Man, Woman, boy and girl.

Weekend, February 18-20

Mr. Cell Block Leather Man contest at that world-famous bar this weekend, Pantheon of Leather and fun galore in the Windy City.

PORN

Pretty and hardcore

by John F. Karr

Anyone who's seen George Duroy's *Cover Boys* has probably become a fan of the director. His latest is *Pretty Boy*, and it's the most refreshing movie I've seen all year. It's breezy all the way: diaphanous curtains waft gently in patio breezes, while indoors, elegantly simple furnishings provide a summery feel. But the boys are even fresher, and the title isn't bragging, these young men are remarkably pretty. Blondes predominate, but there are dark-haired beauties as well. They have flawless complexions, with pink cheeks fore and aft. Smooth and hairless athletic bodies, unusually large schlongs, and tasty foreskins are the order of the day. But counting for even more is the personality they display, with laughter and smiles and an ingenious enthusiasm.

Most American-made porn is so deadly earnest in comparison, with its insistence that high-frenzy equals hot fuck. Duroy's boys make out with no less abandon than their American counterparts, but they certainly seem to get more enjoyment out of it. Talk about love in bloom. Duroy must be credited for pairings that always spark, and for encouraging the performers' playful attitude. Duroy also adds unerring videography, with the boys and/or their genitals always handsomely framed. There aren't any of those anti-gravitational, sideways views to distress your equilibrium. No, it's simply the boys' ardently deployed sexuality that will sway you.

Pretty Boy features a handful of Duroy stars who flip-flop their way through light-hearted encounters that are bathed in light, whether poolside or in a photographer's studio. Following three scenes of zesty young-male love, the movie is capped with the encounter of cover boys Josh Elliot and Matt Phillippe, whose pink cowboy hat matches the pink head of his throbbing cock. They eager-



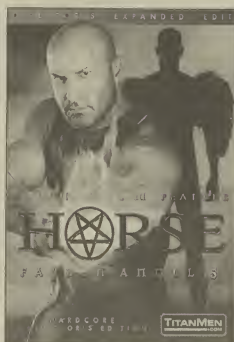
ly swap topping honors, and their exuberance leads to some big bonus loads. You know, I'll admit to greedily gobbling down many flavors of fetish porn. But little else has been as satisfying as these romantic and frisky young fuckers. They obviously love what they're doing, and have been filmed with obvious love as well. www.belamionline.com

Sweat frenzy

TitanMen's dark and foreboding *Horse: Fallen Angel 5* is

a world apart. Most of it is frenzy fuck, slam-bang of the highest order. To bring the *Fallen Angel* saga to a conclusion, director Bruce Cam unleashes a bumper crop of 20 brutal men, in a fetish bonanza that has eye-popping dildo-play, a harsh flogging, lots of watersports, plus a fisting, as well as branding and scarification. But what is remembered of this four-hour onslaught is the ferocious fucking, with big, hairy, sweat-covered and muscular daddies driving it into some of the most talented bottoms around.

Director Cam has concocted a highly imaginative futureworld for *Horse*. Up in the daylight, there's a world of horses, barns and ponyboys kept captive in the stalls. Below ground, in fantastic subterranean grottos ablaze with firelight and belching furnaces, there's a world of commandos



with their own slaves. How these worlds interface isn't explained—there's neither dialogue nor plot to slow down this movie's fantasia of fetish and fierce fucking, but it seems to work like this: the masters lead the slaves through the initiating rites that will, in turn, make masters of them.

And what mastery is displayed. Joey Russo's incomparable hard cock stands stiff and throbbing for worship, a scepter worthy of a sun god. Rugged Spencer Quest is a thrilling topman who submits to a rugged ride atop Russo's divine rod. Sebastian Tauza gives a master class in dildo reception, and the eager hunger with which Joshua Adams embraces the merciless poundings of several huge, sturdy top men simply took my breath away. Throw in ruthless fucker Joey Dino, plus currently popular stars like Troy Punk and Frederik Ford, as well as the debut of hypermasculine, darkly furred Mr. LA Leather Hunt Parker, and you've got one gargantuan epic.

It's also got an entirely novel look. The underworld sets are impressive, and for the men, Cam's designers have created an array of unusually butch and really different leatherwear that could completely up-end prevailing fashions. For one thing, it's not black. I should think the leather set is ready for a shake-up, the *Drummer* look's been around for awhile, ya know. Anyway, *Horse* is the currently last word as far as the large-cast, many-part, leathersex sport-fuck and fetish sextavagaza goes. www.titanmen.com



Karnal Knowledge

Mister Marcus

◀ previous page

are an "aware" individual, you can check with other people who might have knowledge of which titleholders were where on a given weekend.

The final word on this is: Do Not Send Money unless you personally recognize the voice of the caller. Often you have never met the person who claims to be calling. Comments like, "Don't you remember we got it on at such and such a place?" Some of you who are sexually active at these leather weekend events might be in that category and who remembers one night stands unless the one night stand was an exceptional partner?

My advice is don't even bother with these calls. Hang up immediately. Alerting police does little or no good. You can wire money via Western Union to hundreds of various offices. The caller never will give you a number to call him/her back. Traces on these callers are usually pay phones and sometimes even in your own town!

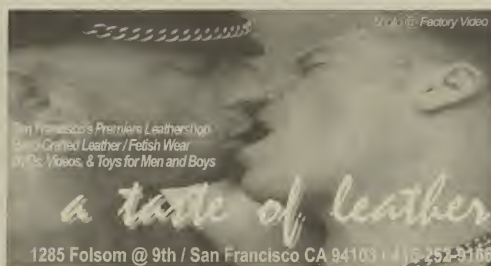


"Tug" Taylor (center) was named Mr. Mid-Atlantic Leather 2004 last January in Washington, D.C. He's seen here with Dennis McMahon, 2nd runner-up, at left, and Jerrell Cooper, 1st runner-up, at right. Tug sashes his successor the weekend of January 14-16, 2005.

Stay alert and aware of these phone scams. Curiously, it has never been reported (at least not to me) that these scams are attempted with other groups (the court system weekends, or gay entertainment groups), so the

leather community is a main target for these criminals. This is the 5th time I am writing to warn you. Take it seriously and be aware, alert and smart. And so it goes.

Happy Holidays to all of you! ▼



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Victorious and glorious

Getting to know singer/songwriter Jill Sobule

by Gregg Shapiro

Underdog *Victorious* (Artemis), the new CD by Jill Sobule, could also describe Sobule herself. Her second disc, released five years after her debut album, launched the singer/songwriter to stardom via the hit single "I Kissed a Girl." Her subsequent albums, including *Happy Town*, *Pink Pearl*, and a compilation set, are all underrated gems. It's conceivable that *Underdog Victorious*, with its brilliant pop numbers, could return her to her rightful place among acclaimed singer/songwriters.

Gregg Shapiro: The new album opens with the song "Freshman," which manages to be both humorous and heartbreakingly serious. It's a look at the life of a struggling musician.

Jill Sobule: If you knew what I was going home to now! There was a flood two days ago. I still have a roommate, and I felt bad because I was busy doing my music stuff, and she had deal with it. So, today's my day.

People imagine that because you

are a musician with a recognizable name, you must lead a sort of glamorous existence. But I know enough musicians and artists to know that's not true.

I have to tell relatives, too. They think that I had my MTV hit, so I should be living the glamorous life. I was talking one day with [singer/songwriter] Syd Straw. She said, "Jill, I have to change my idea of what success is in New York City. I think it's that you have your own washer/dryer."

Underdog Victorious feels like your most New York album.

Yeah. I came from Denver, and I moved to New York in '87. I think I'm a total New Yorker now. I think post-9/11 made me more of a New Yorker.

"Cinnamon Park" contains one of the best uses of a sample ("Saturday in the Park" by Chicago) I've ever heard.

I got a little cheapo, portable sampler that I took on the road with me. Someone gave me some early Chicago. I'd forgotten how

good they were. Not the '80s, Peter Cetera one. My first sample ever on the machine was "Saturday in the Park," and I started singing a little melody over it. I kept remembering *The Battle of the Bands* when I was a kid. Originally it was "Crammers Park," but that just had a really bad sound to it.

With "Cinnamon Park," you're looking back at innocent, hippie drugs, but "The Last Line" is about the evil cocaine drugs. I never did the coke thing, but I had friends who did. Me and stimulants are redundant.

The album also has a queer sensibility, which you can hear on "Under the Disco Ball."

I'm one of those people who can spend hours online looking at oddball things. I'm obsessed by this ex-gay ministry site called "Stephen Bennett Ministries." He used to be gay and bulimic, but now he's changed! You look at the pictures, and he's so gay! "Under the Disco Ball" was from my obsession with that Internet site.

When I'm in LA, once in a while I'll put on one of those hardcore, right-wing talk shows, and they're obsessed with the "gay agenda."

Because I don't fly, I'm often driving across country, and I've heard some of these radio shows, and they are genuinely frightening. You'd think they would be more interested in curing cancer than obsessing over what they think is the gay agenda.

What is it about Joey Heatherton that inspired you to write the song "Joey"?

I remember when I was a little girl, thinking she was so glamorous and cute. Then I was in a checkout line, and there was a magazine on her, and she looked so awful. She was so anorexic, and she looked like a crack whore. Also, there was one of those *E!* biographies on her. It was at a time when I had this idea to write an album called *Tabloid Music*, my *E!* biography album. There's something about the stars that fall so hard. It's my Greek tragedy on the album. ▼



'About the stars that fall so hard.'

Goodbye, Biber 2004

Baroque composer cherished on his 300th

by Tim Pfaff

We're just getting in under the wire with our coverage of the death tercentenary of Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber (1644-1704) on CD, but the studio festivities have been substantial. Biber, among the greatest German Baroque composers pre-Bach, has long been treasured by lovers of the 17th-century Baroque, and specialists have rewarded them with an exquisite trove throughout 2004.



Among the last to appear was Paul McCreesh's superb Gabrieli Consort & Players, who offer the Salzburg composer's Mass in B-Flat Major in the kind of liturgical setting McCreesh favors (that is, interspersed with music by other composers, as it would probably have originally been given) and, fittingly, his Requiem in F minor (Archiv).

Without ever being heavy-handed about it, McCreesh and his musicians give incisive musical renditions of this complex music without slighting its spiritual dimensions. The music does not, to use Emily Dickens' words, "oppress, like the heft of cathedral tunes." Still, it is, consistently, deeply felt. Given the often-monstrous technical difficulties Biber's writing poses, it's a tribute to the team that they can get strings, vocal chords, and hearts vibrating in such exquisite unison.

McCreesh's savvy choice of breaking up the relatively more conventional B-flat Mass with music by Biber's contemporaries and teachers gives it greater gravitas. The CD builds inexorably to a particularly vivid setting of the familiar Requiem text that not only needs no such larding, but might be diminished by it. Instead, it is followed, in the CD's final track, with the album's subdued yet rapturous motive work, Orlando di Lasso's motet "Media vita in morte summa" ("In the midst of life we are in death").

No matter the fare, McCreesh's soloists and choristers (the same singers) approach it with uncommon acuity and consummate ensemble. Further augmenting the effect is their blend with the instrumentalists, who use the unique violin tunings Biber devised to specific expressive ends. The Requiem unfolds with almost eerie liquidity until it reaches the concluding "Lux aeterna," when the overlapping voices, spread over the largest vocal range to be found in the work, create an episode of quietly ecstatic elevation.

Mystery plays

The year brought three new recordings of Biber's "Mystery Sonatas," but the only one I could get my hands on is the one widely regarded as the greatest.

The "Mysterien" are those of the Catholic Rosary, so violin wizard Andrew Manze plays them under the name *The Rosary Sonatas* (Harmonia Mundi). Call them what you will, they're some of the most intriguing pieces in the violin literature—cult pieces, really, among string players, whose passionate ideas about them and their meanings sometimes verge on the psychotic.

In a typically insightful note, but even more tellingly in his deeply concentrated playing, Manze decries the notion that these pieces about 15 events in the life of Jesus and Mary (the mys-

teries) are in any way programmatic, that is, explicitly narrative or sound-effect-oriented. They are, he insists (and proves, with his magisterial interpretations) instead, meditations. That view yields his greatest CD to date, which is saying something.

What makes them so hard to play is that, despite a consistent style of notation, each one of the 15 sonatas (a loose term; one is a single movement) uses a different tuning of the violin's four gut strings. The technical term for it is *scordatura*, which Manze explains with some musical examples in the final track. The marvel of it is the sharp difference of character it lends each sonata. Some of the tunings are so extreme that you can, as Manze suggests, almost feel the agony of the violin (a fine Amati from 1700), which is particularly appropriate for the sorrowful *Mysterien* of the Passion.

Another shrewd, musically sound decision—which only Manze, of the three violinists who recorded the set this year, elects—is to use solo accompaniments, by organ or harpsichord, by Manze's exemplary longtime partner



Richard Egarr (and Alison McGillivray's cello augmenting "The Ascension").

The most arresting thing about Manze's playing of this sublime music is how little attention he calls to the effort involved. His laser-like attention is on musical values alone, and the rewards are inestimable. Radically ornate figures float free, and the pair's rhythmic elasticity makes it all seem as easy, and essential, as breathing. In Sonata IX, "The Carrying of the Cross," the music (and wood) seem carried by the notes themselves. "The Descent of the Holy Spirit" feels like nothing less.

Violinist John Holloway, who has made several remarkable Biber CDs, joins organist Aloysia Assenbaum and harpsichordist Lars Ulrik Morentsen for six more Biber sonatas, coupled with another by Georg Muffat, on *Der Türken Anmarsch* (ECM). These wonderful, musically rich performances shouldn't be heard the same day you listen to Manze. ▼

Beijing

◀ page 30

their initial courtship and the difficulties engendered by their differing cultural perspectives. But as the relationship works toward the moment of David's departure from China, and the climax of David's personal crisis, Gambone seems to take some shortcuts. He focuses on David's internal struggle to commit to his new love and seems to devote less attention to Bosheng's reaction to their coming separation.

Perhaps David's primary quest is whether or not he can move beyond his nomadic ways and actually settle down with someone.

Again like Melville's Ishmael, David finds himself only after the challenges of a difficult journey. Gambone paces his story well, but one yearns for certain details and characters to be filled in more.

As is to be expected in a novel set in China, Eastern philosophy figures in the outlooks and motivations of a number of the characters, ultimately serving to bring David to an unexpectedly positive realization about his life. The novel does not end in a conventionally happy, neatly wrapped package, but it concludes on an affirmative note. That it does so is redemptive for the main character, and, to some extent, for the book itself. *Beijing* is not a sophisticated novel, but it's full of heart. ▼

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Out There

◀ page 26

Kate Pierson, who lived in the cabin at one time, jammed down with the beefy Bs. We think Pierson is maybe bi, and we know that her beehive hairdo is gay. We hope they rebuild the shack, and maybe take the trouble to register it as a historic structure. But please don't make us listen to "Love Shack" again.



Strange rites

Nowhere in the mountainous press coverage of *The Aviator* have we seen any mention of wild man Howard Hughes' alleged bisexuality. But according to Charles Higham's biography, Hughes had an affair with studpole Cary Grant, among others, at around the same time that he was romancing the brilliant yet batty Katharine Hepburn. This may be something to consider as you contemplate "HH" Leonardo DiCaprio's baby face up there on the Silver Screen.

Apropos of nothing, Out There's nomination for the most fabulous correction of the week comes from last Saturday's *New York Times* "Corrections: For the

Record" column. "A picture caption on Thursday about 200 bison that were being sent to South Dakota from Santa Catalina Island, off California, misidentified an object held by an Indian performing a ritual to mark the departure. It was a percussion stick, not a peace pipe." But we're pretty sure the damn drum was a bong.

For the record

Erasure singer Andy Bell announced last week that he is HIV+, but has been taking combination therapy since '98, is "feeling fine," and in fact has "never felt better."

Congrats to Kun-Yang Lin and Kenneth Metzner, who celebrated their man-on-man love by posting their picture together on the *Weddings* announcement page of the *NY Times*, a mostly hetero ghetto.

Novelist and gay rights activist Joseph Hansen, whose highly successful mystery series featured one of the genre's first openly gay investigators, Dave Brandstetter, has died in Laguna Beach at age 81, after a long illness [Reuters].

Hansen introduced Brandstetter in the 1970 novel *Fadeout* and continued the series through a dozen books ending in '91. He told *The Orange County Register* in a '98 interview, "My joke was to take the true, hard-boiled character in American-fiction tradition, and make him homosexual. He was going to be a nice man, a good man, and he was doing to do his job well."

News of Hansen's departure from this mortal coil came to us from crime novelist Steven Saylor (*The Judgment of Caesar*), who said he "had the pleasure of lunching with Joe a few times when he came up to San Francisco, and was glad for the chance to let him know how greatly I admired his prose style and subtle plotting." RIP. ▼

Cassavetes

◀ page 32

you have no one else to blame."

By all accounts, Cassavetes was a joyous, funny, impulsive man who loved good food and conversation. He detested most entertainment, and audiences could trust that his character studies wouldn't lurch into plot-driven escapism. He was, and still is, a tonic against obscenely budgeted,

overproduced Disney rides doubling as movies. To watch *Faces* on its definitive DVD is to mingle with articulate, exciting people who still offer something wholly different. Gena Rowlands may be forgiven a moment of sentimentality when she spoke of the Cassavetes era as "a privileged little spot in time." What she and others make clear, all these years later, is that Cassavetes' experiments were very much worth making. *criterionco.com* ▼

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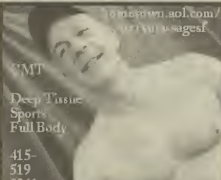
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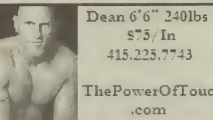
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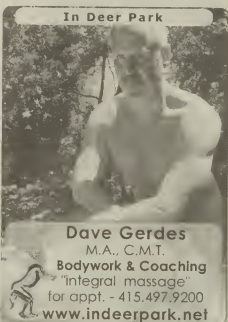
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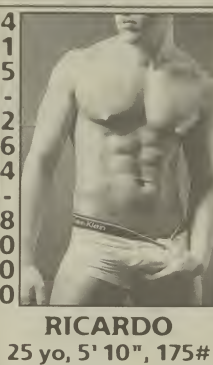
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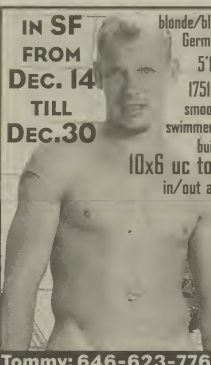
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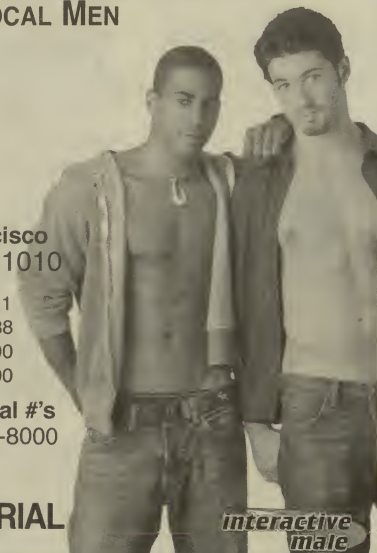
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PARTING GLANCES

Get Together?

Mike, we met 12/16 at P.O.H. Would love to get together for conversation or??? Want to talk about it? 71453

Gustavo: Cybelle's @ Bush/Jones
I don't know if you're gay, but Carlos is interested in you. Call me 71449

RPCV Western Samoa
Found your Fate at "Out of the Closet" on Church.
Let's Talk. 71438

SEEKING RELATIONSHIP

Hungry in Oakland

Handsome African American man seeking other hungry AA men for discrete sex. Let me suck it. Let's be friends. Serious only.
71452

ISO Mature Responsible GLM/GWM

I'm passionate, romantic GLM, 53, HIV-, 5'10", 200#, beard, enjoy leather, sheer nylon, body jewelry, movies, bodybuilding. You're 40+, facial hair, uncult. Smoker/drinker ok, no drugs. Seeking LTR. 71452

Sharing Is Better Than Not

GAM, 38, 5'7", medium build, caring, sensitive, honest professional looking for giving, deep thinking, down to Earth, masculine man, 39-46, to develop friendship/something more. Willing to relocate. 71443

ISO Well Endowed L XL G8M

Submissive sexy GWM 45, slim 6', hairy, shaved head, healthy HIV+, passionate, playful, good sense of humor, honest. Older/larger, sincere, hot LTR preferred. No Hard Drugs. Go For It. 71444

SEEKING ADVENTURE

Handsome English Broken Latino

Slender, light skin, 5'7", 165 lbs., looking for friend and something more (37 y/o) 71445

Black/White XXX-Rated Sex

GWM 5'11" 175lbs. masculine and fit seeks black guys for hot sex and travel. Love to fuck and suck.
Baths, nude beaches and more.
71450

Just a Little Rough

Do You Like The Feel of Teeth on Your Hard Cock? Having Your Balls Pulled? Me Too. GWM, 59, 5'10", 145lbs.
Let's Talk.
71448

Playful Submissive Bottom

GWM 40, 162, 6'1", HIV+, Bottom & Oral. ISO GM, 35-50yrs. A Top, love Brn & dark hair. I need a buddy to play with, one on one. Please, can learn from, etc.
Add that to what I know, and wow, thank you!
71442

Younger/Older GW Sex Buddies

Seeking others for casual, hot get-togethers in South Santa Cruz County. All races welcome. Must be 18-26, fit, healthy. We are 50 and 24, healthy, versatile.
Let's play!
71441

FETISHES

Medical Exam Pig

GWM 59" 160lbs 41 needs a complete, humiliating, sadistic physical by real Doc, P.A., or nurse. Open me wide. Confidentiality assured.
71447

Serious Nipple Pig ISO Nip Workout Buddy

Serious Nip Pig 50 yr old 220# & huge erect nips seeks dominant, masculine, muscular Nip Pig wkout buddy for serious Nip workout sessions. Brn, brn, saltpepper galee, tats piercings, Smoker - smokers A+
71446



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BAR TALK

PERSONALS ARE FREE!

CATEGORY

- Parting Glances ☐
Seeking Relationship ☐
Seeking Adventure ☐
Lesbian ☐
Fetishes ☐
Couples ☐
Others ☐

Headline, 30 characters maximum

Write the rest of your ad here, 30 words maximum

MAIL FORM TO: BAR Talk, Bay Area Reporter, 395 Ninth Street, San Francisco, CA 94103

You must use this form to submit ads. Deadline for ads is **TUESDAY at 5 PM**, for the following week's issue. New ads run for three consecutive weeks. You will be notified by mail with information on how to leave and retrieve messages from your mailbox ad. Print clearly. No ads will be accepted without valid address, telephone number and legible text. The Bay Area Reporter reserves the right to edit ads. **One ad per customer per week.**

Name _____ Daytime Telephone _____
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